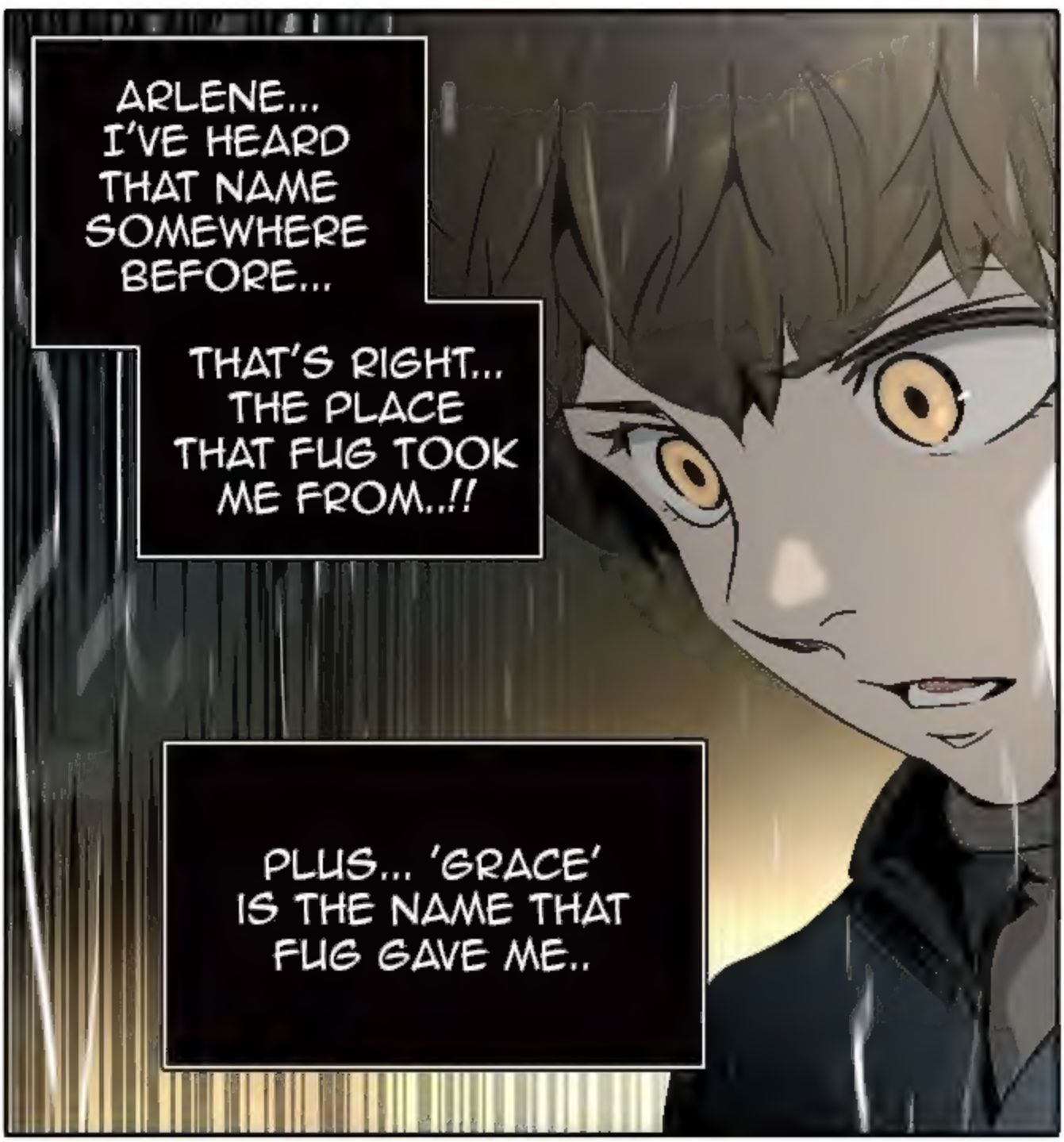
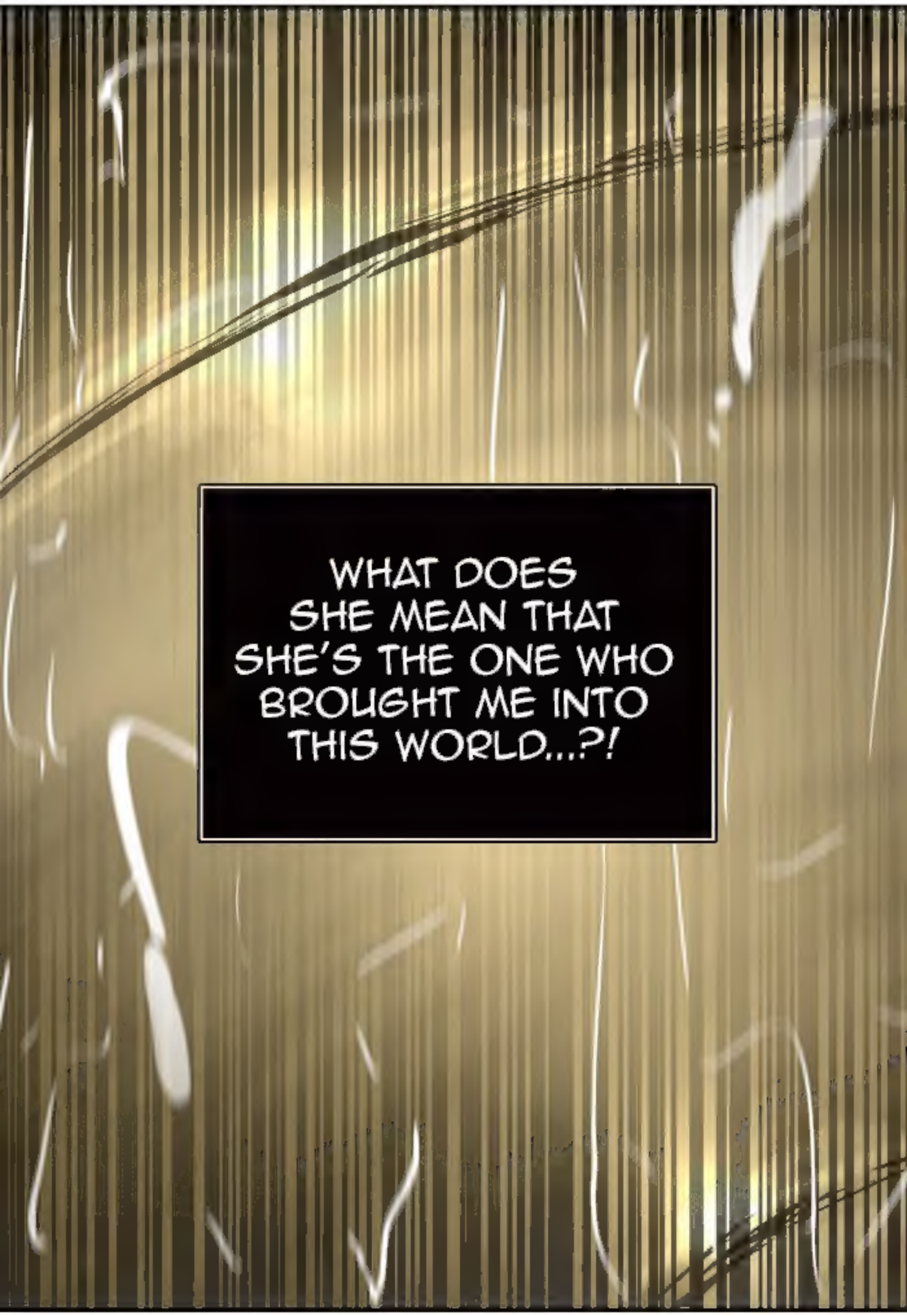
ARLENE...
GRACE..?


ARLENE... I'VE HEARD THAT NAME SOMEWHERE BEFORE...
THAT'S RIGHT... THE PLACE THAT FUG TOOK ME FROM...!!
PLUS... 'GRACE' IS THE NAME THAT FUG GAVE ME..


WHAT DOES SHE MEAN THAT SHE'S THE ONE WHO BROUGHT ME INTO THIS WORLD...?!

Talse uzer story by Slave. In. Utero

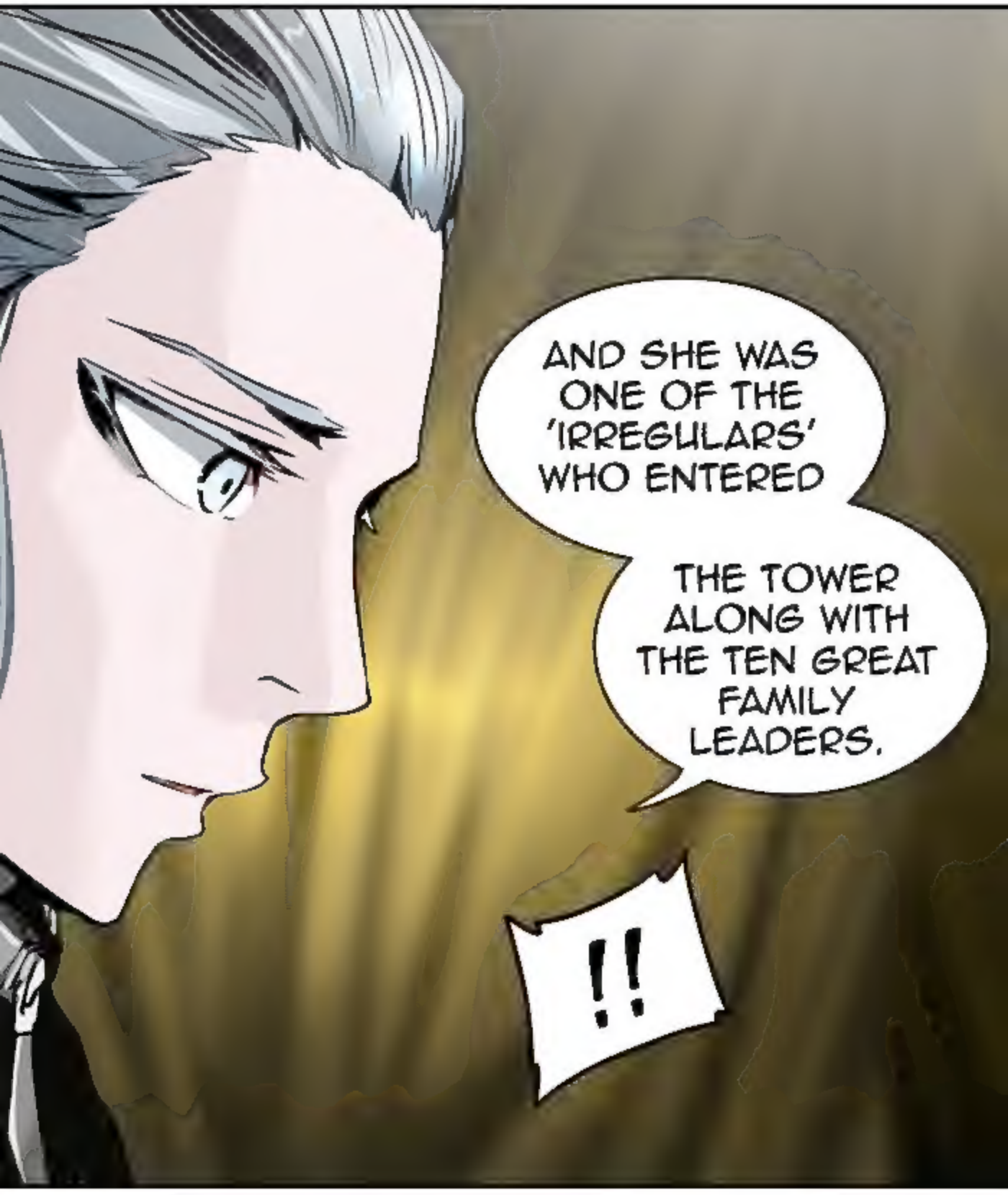
Tower of God

THE HELL TRAIN
- THE FLOOR OF DEATH -

TELL ME!!
WHEN YOU SAY THAT SHE 'BROUGHT ME INTO THIS WORLD'... DO YOU MEAN..!!
SHE'S MY MOTHER..?!
WELL... HOW SHOULD I EXPLAIN THIS..?

COULD YOU REALLY CALL HER... A MOTHER?
I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THAT.
WHAT?

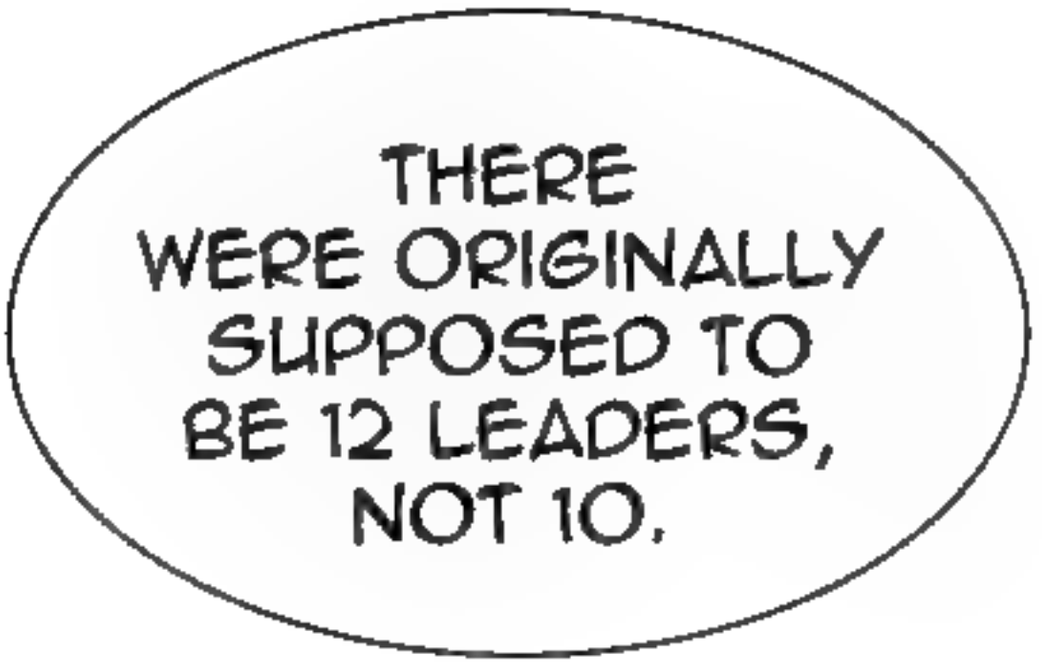
SHE'S BEEN HERE LONGER THAN I HAVE
SO I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THE EXACT DETAILS.
...?
WHAT I'M SURE OF IS THAT SHE PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN BRINGING YOU TO THIS PLACE.


AND SHE WAS ONE OF THE 'IRREGULARS' WHO ENTERED
THE TOWER ALONG WITH THE TEN GREAT FAMILY LEADERS.
!!

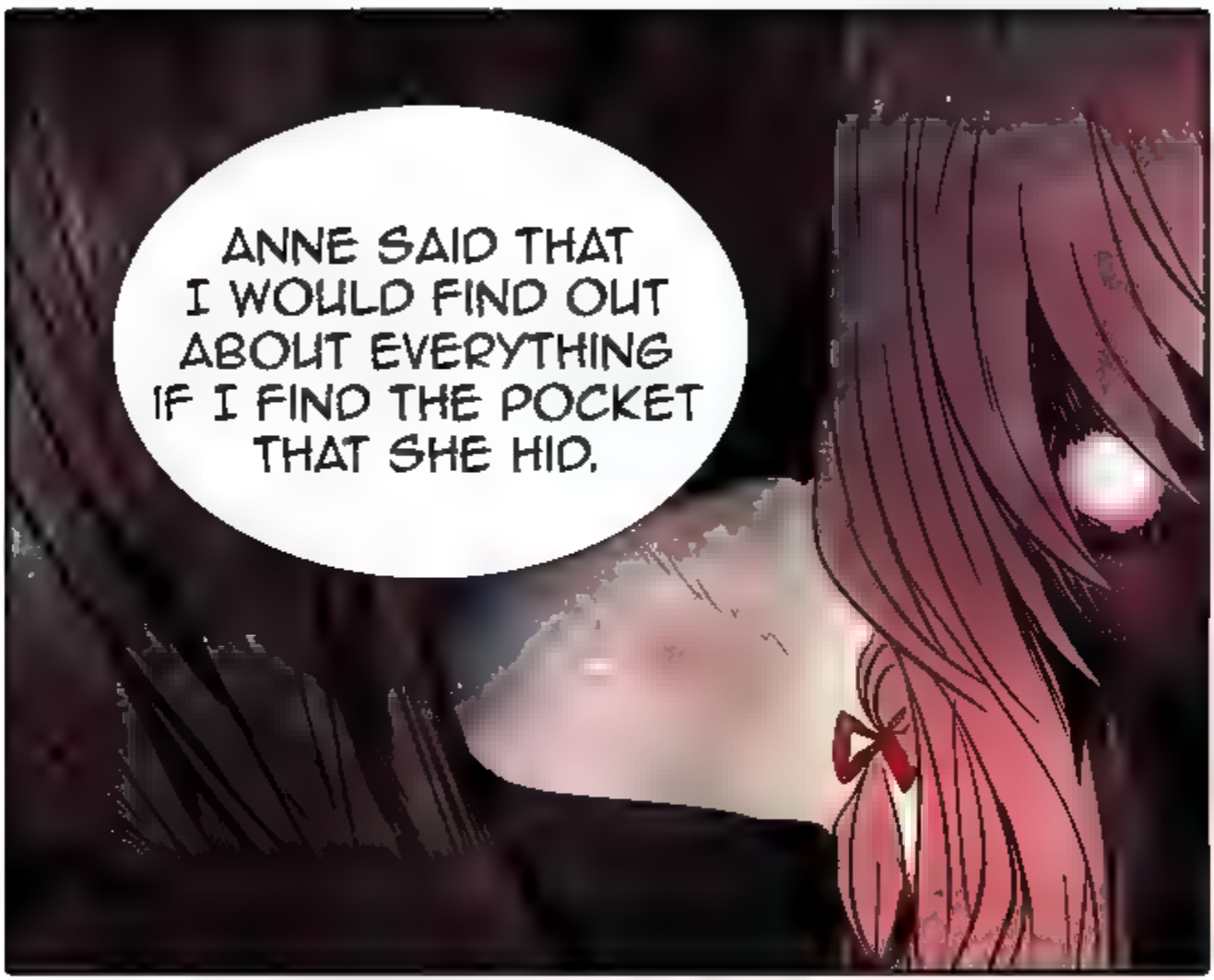
B-BUT... RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE ONLY TEN FAMILY LEADERS...
THAT'S RIGHT. BUT ACTUALLY, THERE USED TO BE 13 OF THEM.
ALTHOUGH THERE ARE ONLY ELEVEN NOW.

WHY WOULD JAHAD HAVE BOTHERED TO SPLIT THE 13 MONTH SERIES INTO 13 PIECES?
SOME LEGENDS SAY THAT ONE YEAR IN HIS HOMETOWN IS 13 MONTHS
BUT THEN THERE MUST BE A SEPARATE REASON FOR SPLITTING THE KEY INTO 13 PIECES TO BEGIN WITH
AND IT'S NATURAL TO NAME THAT THE '13 MONTH SERIES,' RIGHT?

THE 13 MONTHS WERE SPLIT UP SO THAT JAHAD AND HIS 12 COMPANIONS COULD SHARE THE KEY.
ONE OF THEM IS ARLENE GRACE.


THERE
WERE ORIGINALLY
SUPPOSED TO
BE 12 LEADERS,
NOT 10.

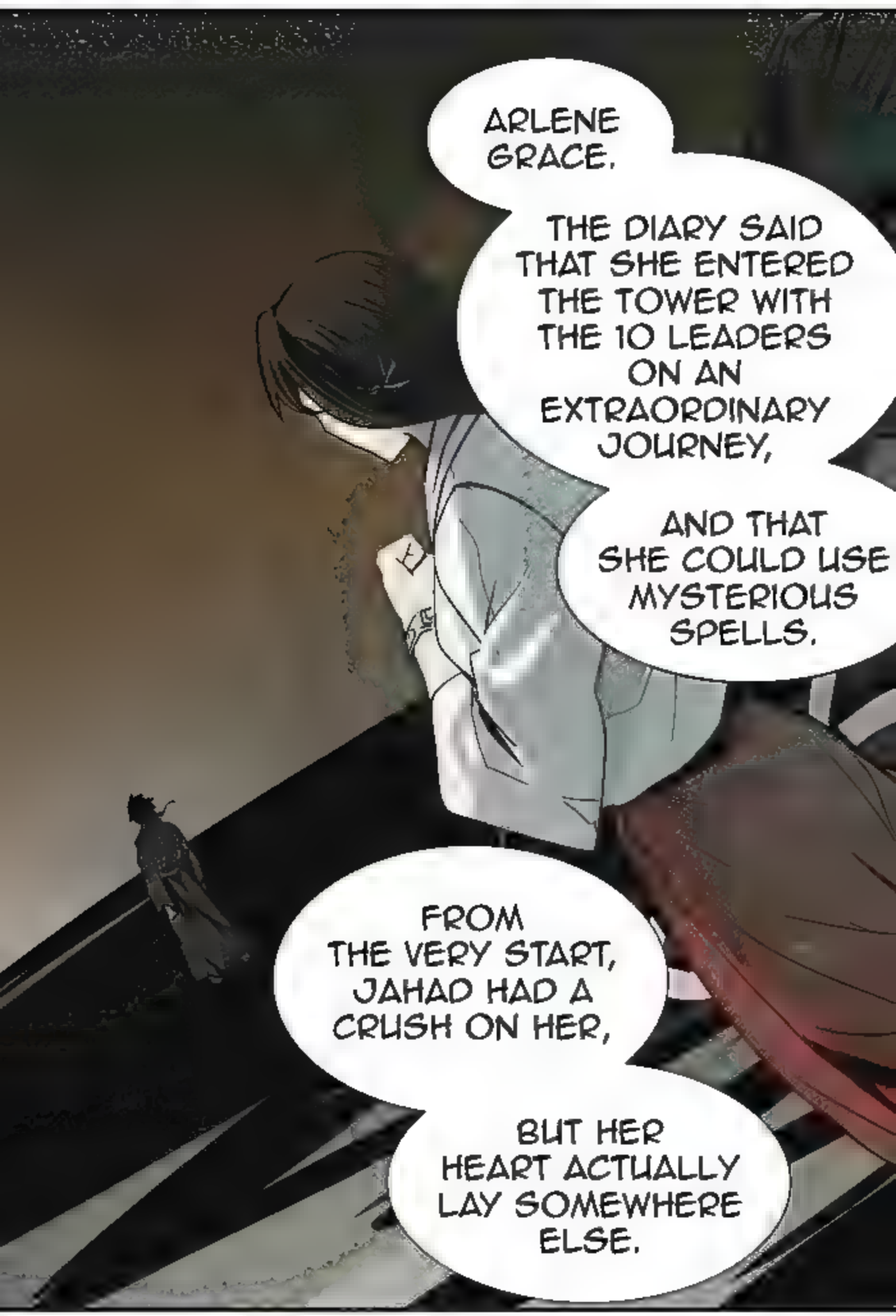
A HIDDEN IRREGULAR...
I DIDN'T BELIEVE THAT SHE EXISTED EVEN WHEN ANNE MENTIONED HER EXISTENCE.
I FIGURED THAT IT WAS PROBABLY A DELUSION CREATED BY HER INSANE MIND.

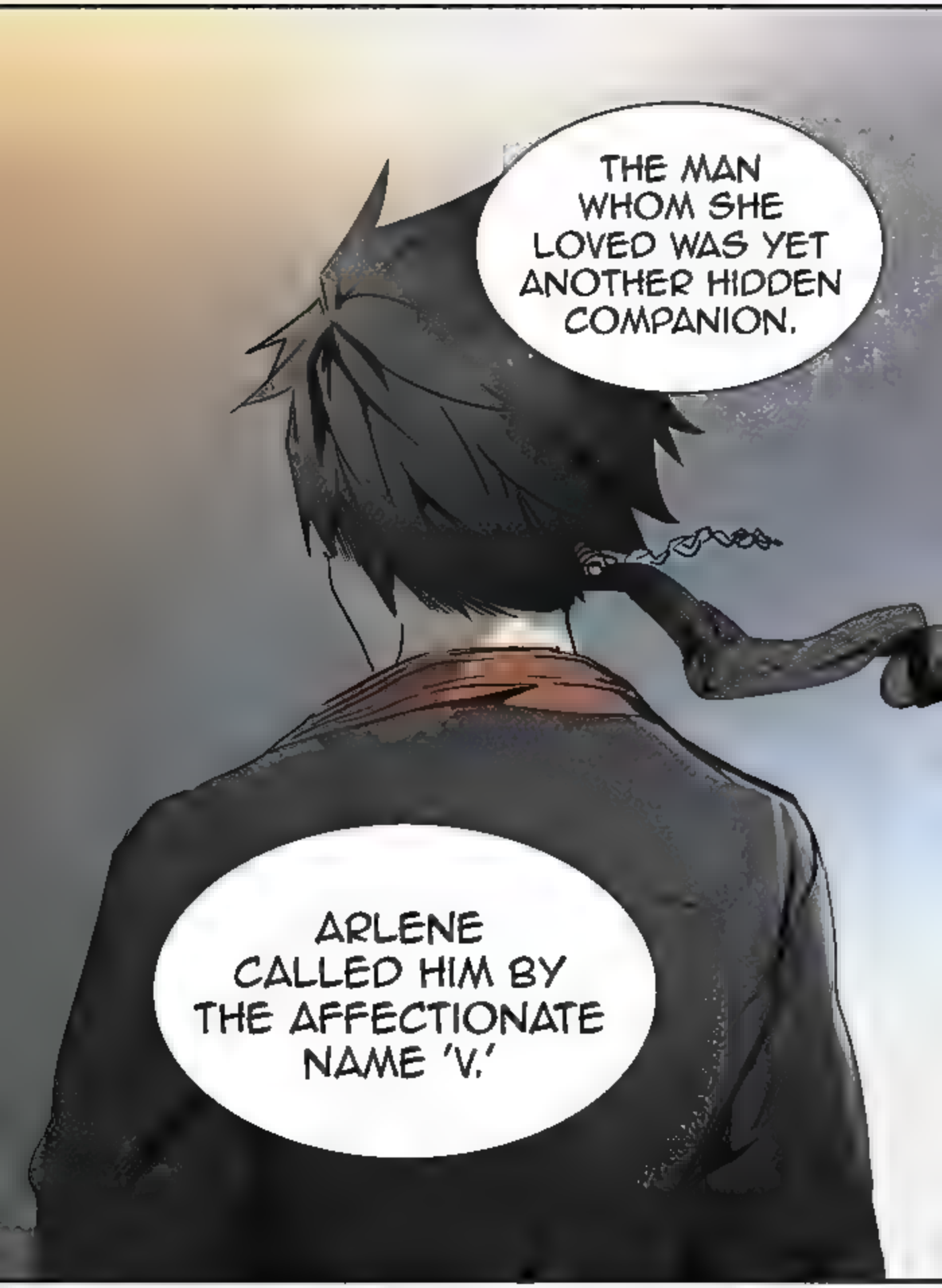

ANNE SAID THAT
I WOULD FIND OUT
ABOUT EVERYTHING
IF I FIND THE POCKET
THAT SHE HID.

I BROKE THROUGH THE JAHAD FAMILY'S OBSTACLES AND FINALLY MANAGED TO FIND THAT POCKET.
IT WAS ONLY AFTER SEEING WHAT WAS INSIDE THAT POCKET THAT I REALIZED THAT WHAT ANNE SAID WASN'T A DELUSION OR LIE.

BECAUSE THAT POCKET WAS THE VERY SAME ONE USED BY ARLENE GRACE.

INSIDE THAT POCKET, THERE WAS A DIARY SAVED WHICH WAS WRITTEN BY ARLENE HERSELF.
I DON'T KNOW FROM WHOM ANNE RECEIVED THAT,
BUT SHE WAS A REAL PERSON.


ARLENE GRACE.
THE DIARY SAID THAT SHE ENTERED THE TOWER WITH THE 10 LEADERS ON AN EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY,
AND THAT SHE COULD USE MYSTERIOUS SPELLS.
FROM THE VERY START, JAHAD HAD A CRUSH ON HER,
BUT HER HEART ACTUALLY LAY SOMEWHERE ELSE.


THE MAN WHOM SHE LOVED WAS YET ANOTHER HIDDEN COMPANION.
ARLENE CALLED HIM BY THE AFFECTIONATE NAME 'V.'

YOUR NAME, 'VIOLE,' PROBABLY CAME FROM THAT PERSON'S NAME.
HE WAS A WARLORD WHOM LUSLEC, THE CURRENT HEAD OF FUG, ONCE SERVED.
!!

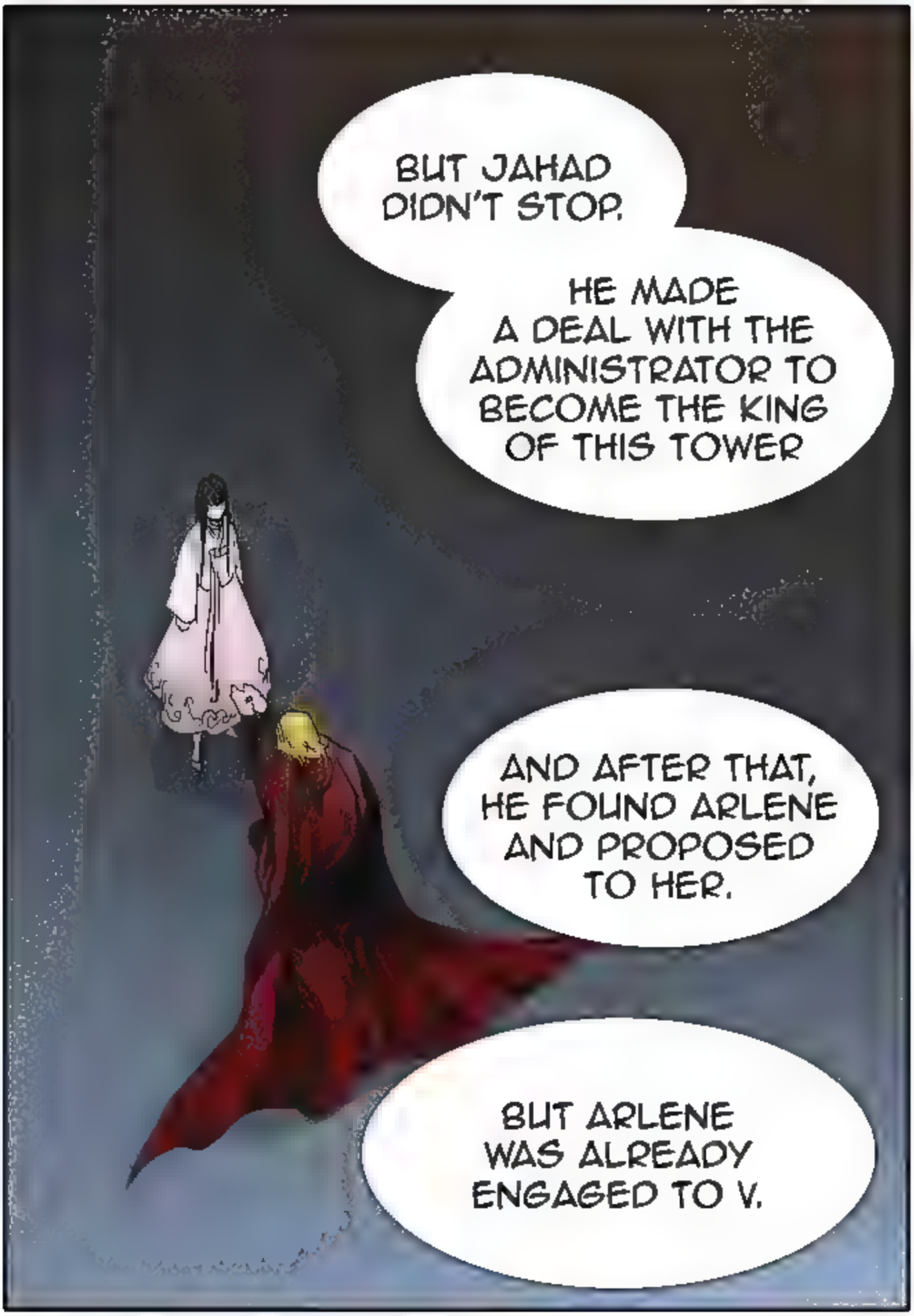
AS THE TWO OF THEM CLIMBED THE TOWER, THEY CONFIRMED THEIR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER AND BEGAN A RELATIONSHIP.

AND AT THE END OF THEIR GREAT JOURNEY,

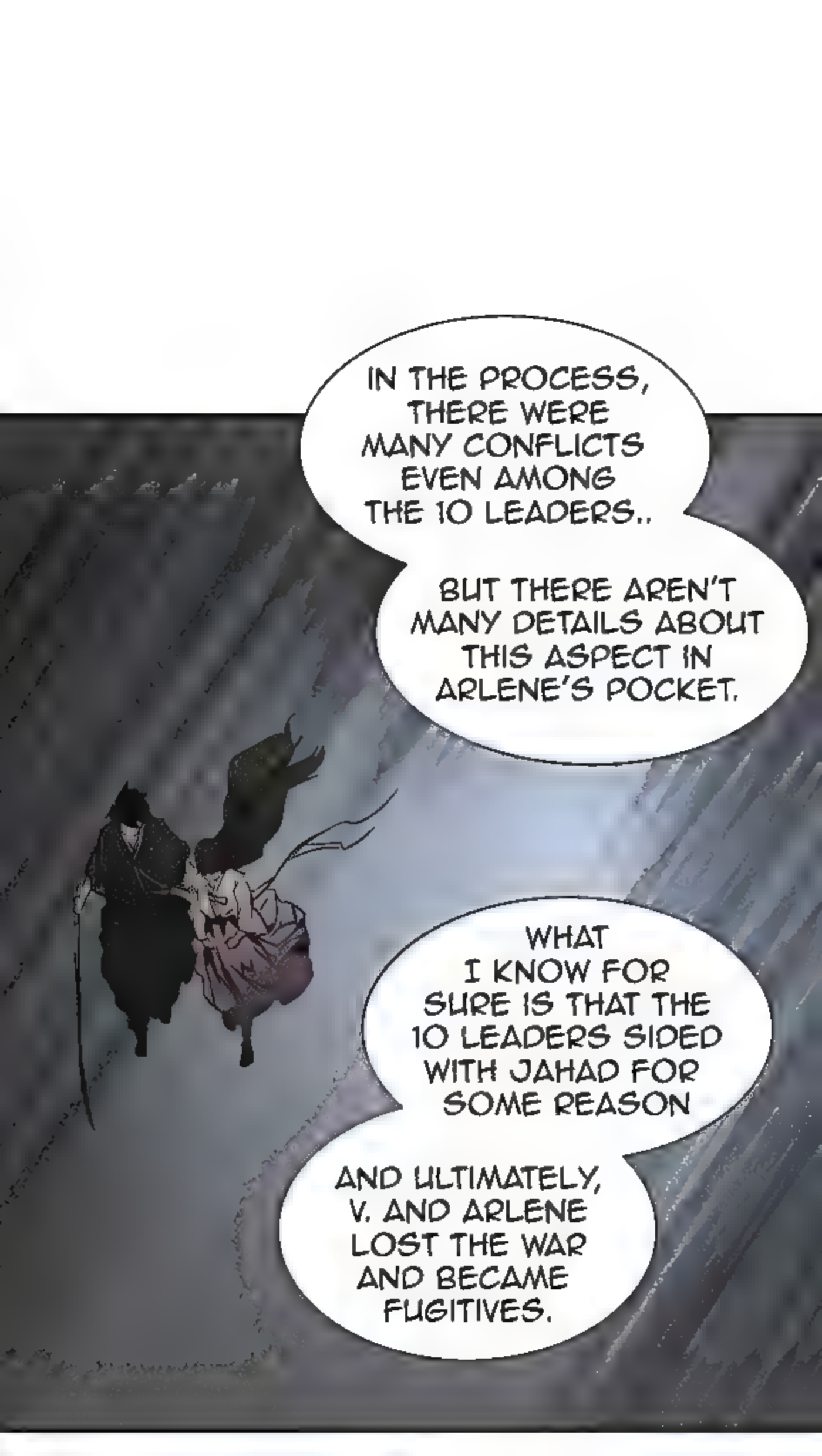
JAHAD ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD STOP CLIMBING THE TOWER AND BECOME KING.

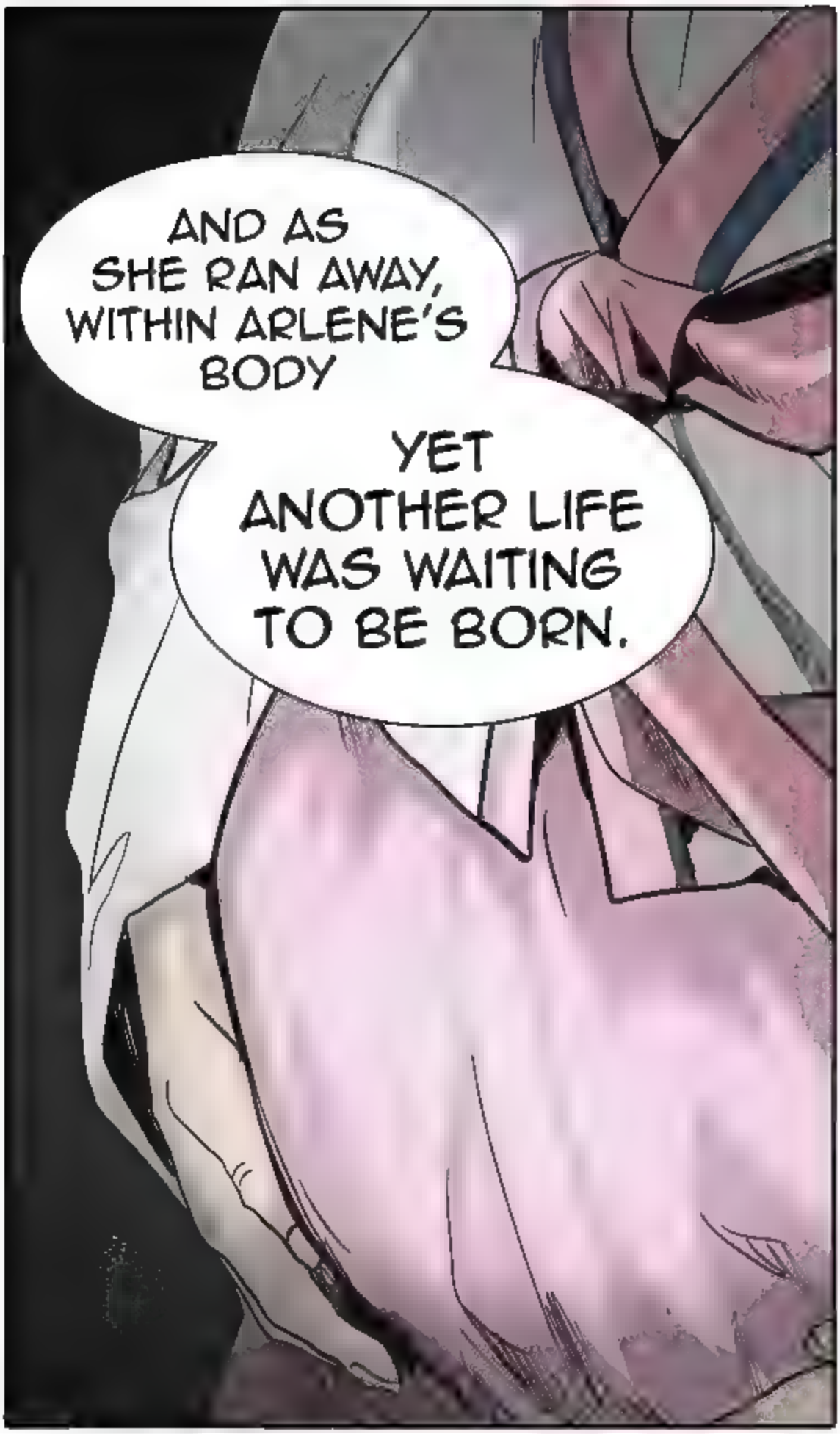
V. AND ARLENE, WHO WANTED TO KEEP CLIMBING THE TOWER, CRITICIZED JAHAD.

ARLENE EXPRESSED JAHAD IN HER RECORDS AS BEING 'BLINDED BY FALSEHOODS.'


BUT JAHAD DIDN'T STOP.
HE MADE A DEAL WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR TO BECOME THE KING OF THIS TOWER
AND AFTER THAT, HE FOUND ARLENE AND PROPOSED TO HER.
BUT ARLENE WAS ALREADY ENGAGED TO V.

ARLENE REFUSED JAHAD'S MARRIAGE PROPOSAL AND RAN AWAY WITH V.
THEN THE TWO OF THEM FORMED AN ORGANIZATION WHICH OPPOSED JAHAD AND STARTED A WAR IN ORDER TO STEAL THE 'KEY' WHICH JAHAD HAD.
JAHAD WAS ALSO ENRAGED AND FOUGHT THEM.


IN THE PROCESS, THERE WERE MANY CONFLICTS EVEN AMONG THE 10 LEADERS..
BUT THERE AREN'T MANY DETAILS ABOUT THIS ASPECT IN ARLENE'S POCKET.
WHAT I KNOW FOR SURE IS THAT THE 10 LEADERS SIDED WITH JAHAD FOR SOME REASON
AND ULTIMATELY, V. AND ARLENE LOST THE WAR AND BECAME FUGITIVES.


AND AS SHE RAN AWAY, WITHIN ARLENE'S BODY
YET ANOTHER LIFE WAS WAITING TO BE BORN.

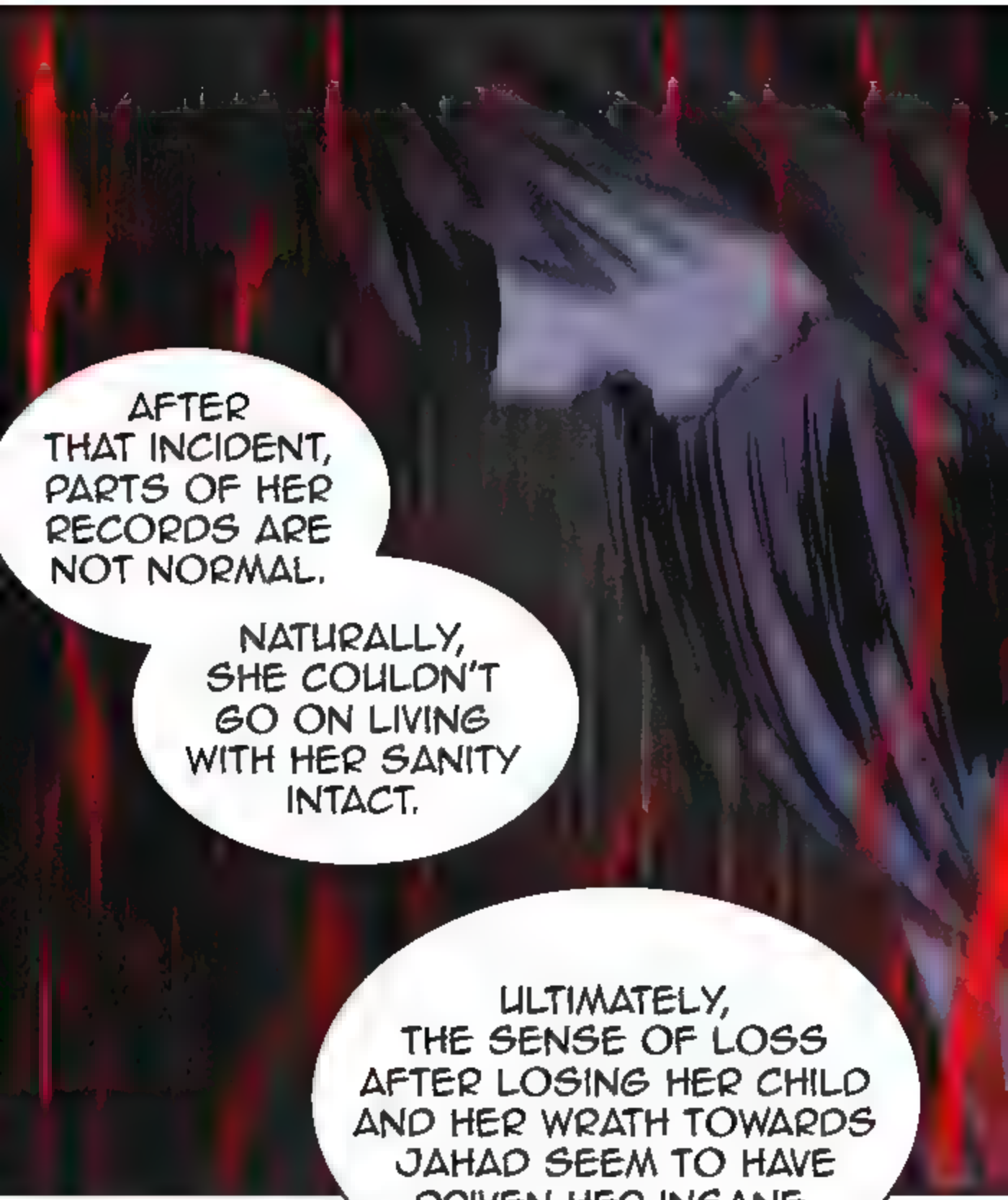
!!
YOU MEAN...!! THAT BABY WAS...?!
NO... THAT CHILD...

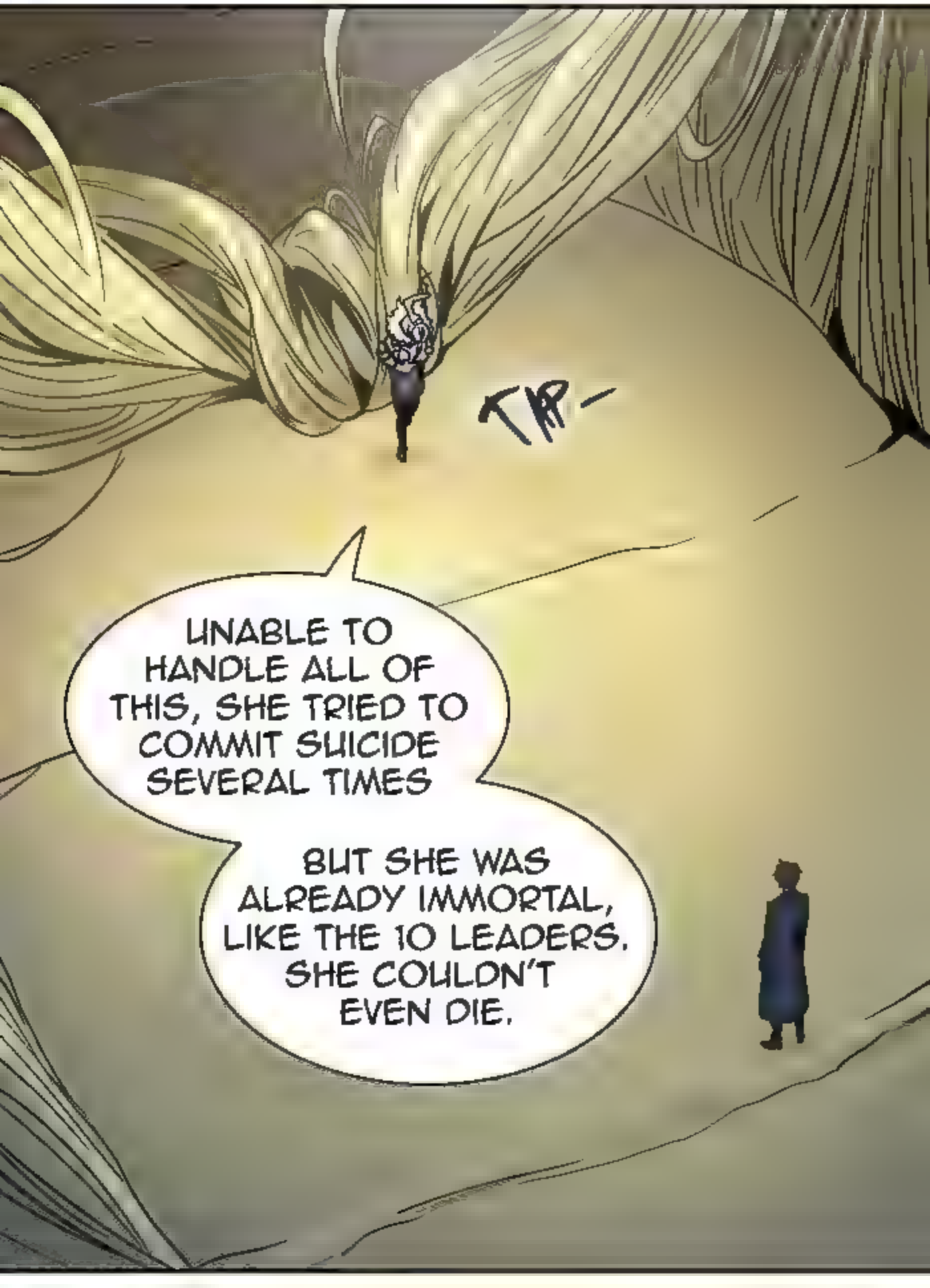
WAS MURDERED BY JAHAD.
WHAT...?!

HAVING HEARD THE RUMORS THAT SHE HAD A CHILD, JAHAD TRACKED DOWN THE CHILD

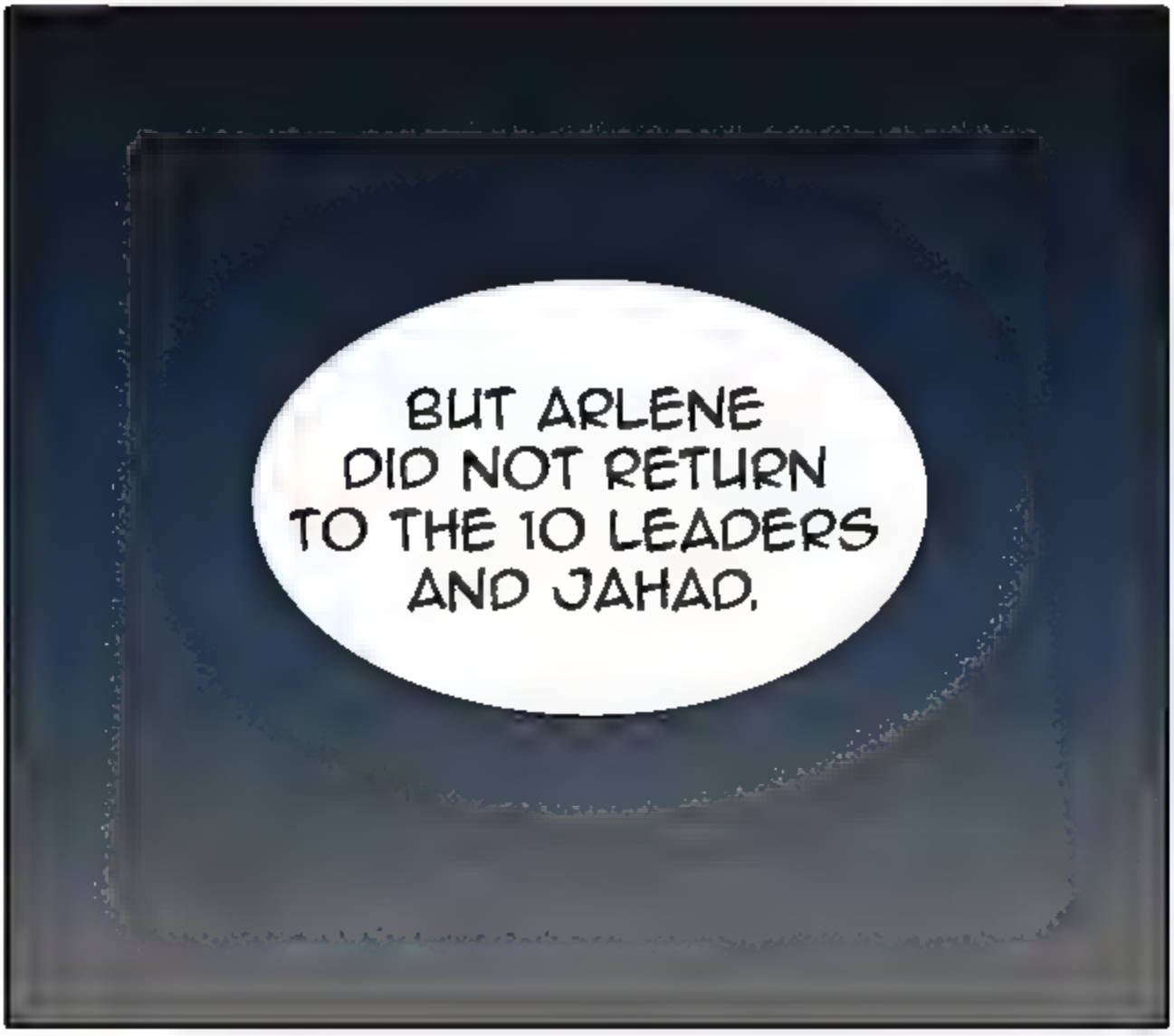
AND KILLED IT RIGHT IN FRONT OF ARLENE'S EYES NOT LONG AFTER IT WAS BORN.

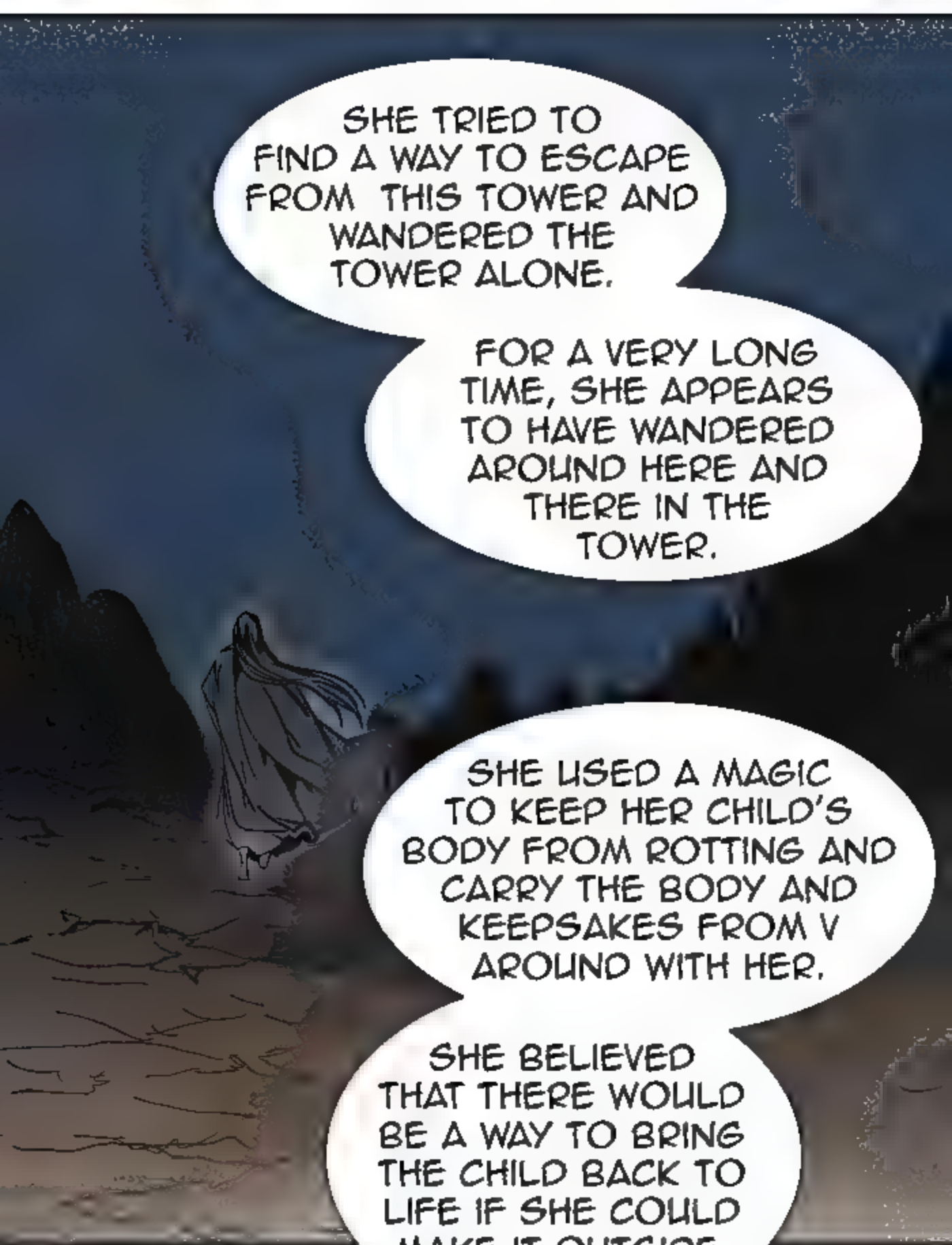
IN HER POCKET, THAT INCIDENT IS DESCRIBED IN TERMS OF EXTREME LOATHING AND RESENTMENT.


AFTER THAT INCIDENT, PARTS OF HER RECORDS ARE NOT NORMAL.
NATURALLY, SHE COULDN'T GO ON LIVING WITH HER SANITY INTACT.
ULTIMATELY, THE SENSE OF LOSS AFTER LOSING HER CHILD AND HER WRATH TOWARDS JAHAD SEEM TO HAVE DRIVEN HER INSANE.

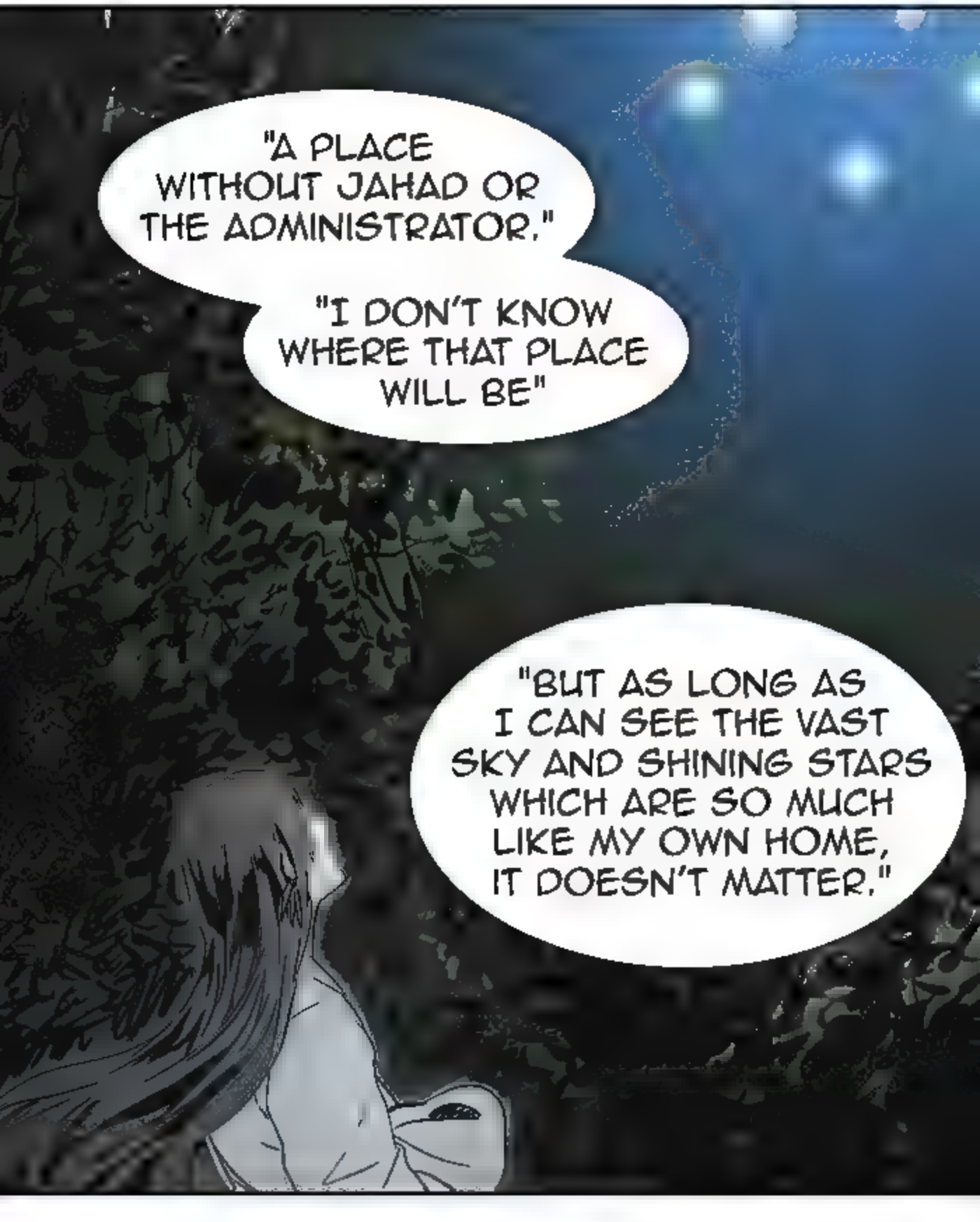

TAP-
UNABLE TO HANDLE ALL OF THIS, SHE TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE SEVERAL TIMES
BUT SHE WAS ALREADY IMMORTAL, LIKE THE 10 LEADERS. SHE COULDN'T EVEN DIE.

BUT V. WAS DIFFERENT.
FOR SOME REASON, HE DOESN'T APPEAR TO HAVE MADE A DEAL FOR IMMORTALITY.
UNABLE TO STAND THE SIGHT OF ARLENE LOSING HER MIND, HE TOOK HIS OWN LIFE.
HE LEFT ARLENE WITH A SUICIDE NOTE SAYING: 'FORGET EVERYTHING, RETURN TO YOUR COMPANIONS AND LIVE HAPPILY.'

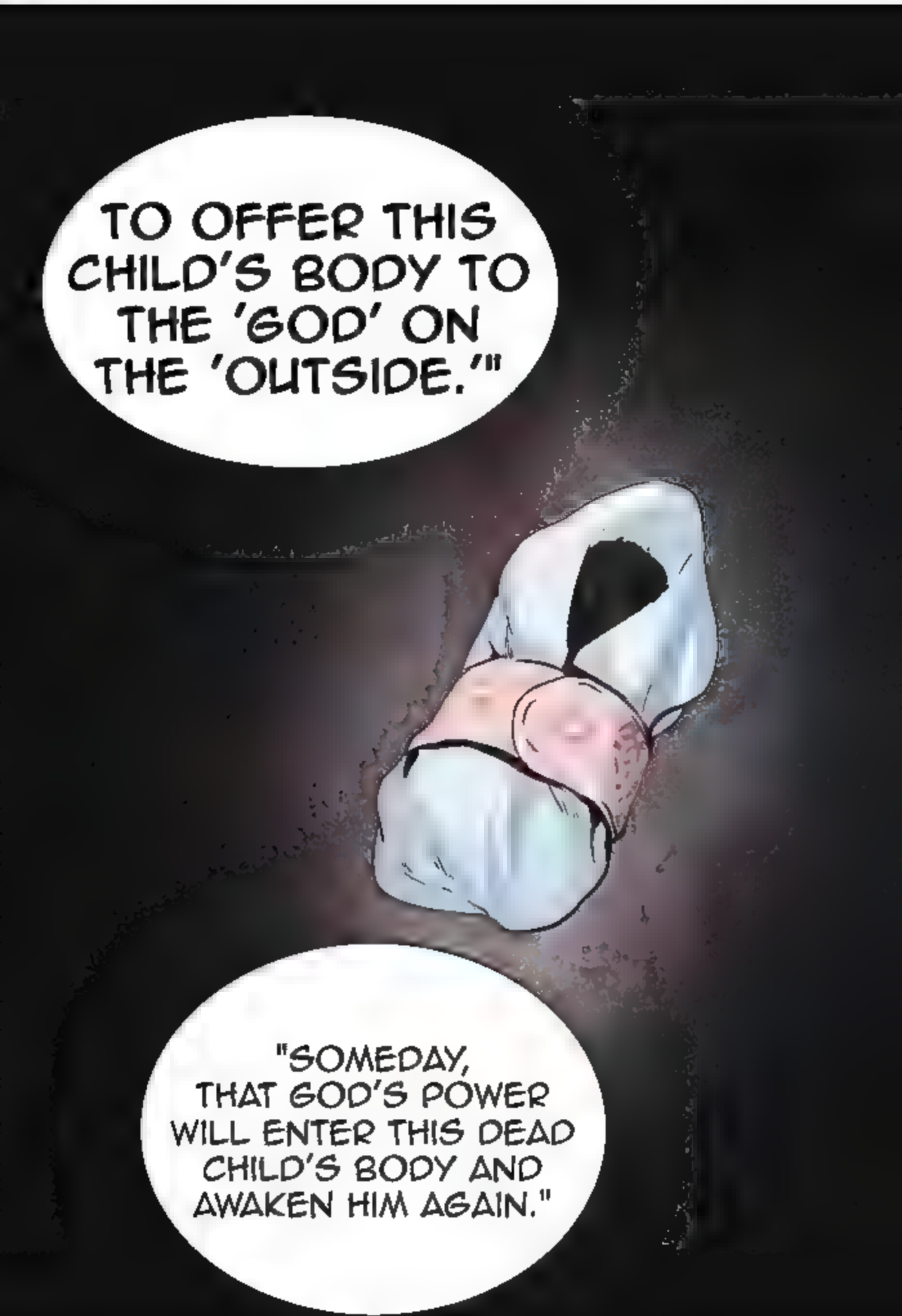

BUT ARLENE
DID NOT RETURN
TO THE 10 LEADERS
AND JAHAD.


SHE TRIED TO FIND A WAY TO ESCAPE FROM THIS TOWER AND WANDERED THE TOWER ALONE.
FOR A VERY LONG TIME, SHE APPEARS TO HAVE WANDERED AROUND HERE AND THERE IN THE TOWER.
SHE USED A MAGIC TO KEEP HER CHILD'S BODY FROM ROTTING AND CARRY THE BODY AND KEEPSAKES FROM V AROUND WITH HER.
SHE BELIEVED THAT THERE WOULD BE A WAY TO BRING THE CHILD BACK TO LIFE IF SHE COULD MAKE IT OUTSIDE.

AND AT THE END OF HER DIARY, SHE WROTE THIS:
WHISH
"I HAVE FINALLY FOUND A WAY TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE."


"A PLACE WITHOUT JAHAD OR THE ADMINISTRATOR."
"I DON'T KNOW WHERE THAT PLACE WILL BE"
"BUT AS LONG AS I CAN SEE THE VAST SKY AND SHINING STARS WHICH ARE SO MUCH LIKE MY OWN HOME, IT DOESN'T MATTER."

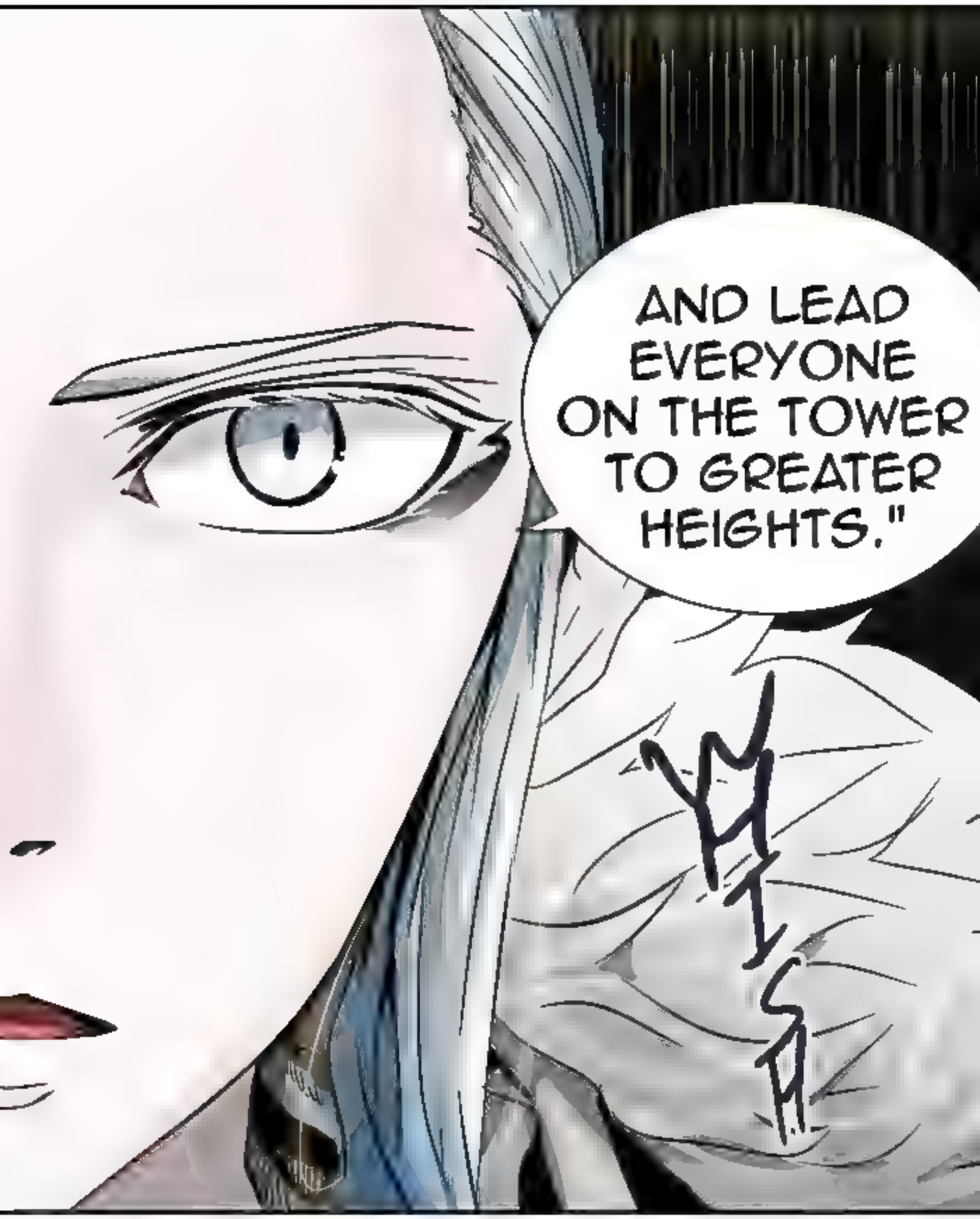
"BUT EVEN AS I WAS LEAVING THIS PLACE,
I COULD NOT LET GO OF THE LONGING FOR MY LOVE AND THE PITY FOR MY DEAD CHILD."
"SO I DECIDED


TO OFFER THIS CHILD'S BODY TO THE 'GOD' ON THE 'OUTSIDE.'"
"SOMEDAY, THAT GOD'S POWER WILL ENTER THIS DEAD CHILD'S BODY AND AWAKEN HIM AGAIN."

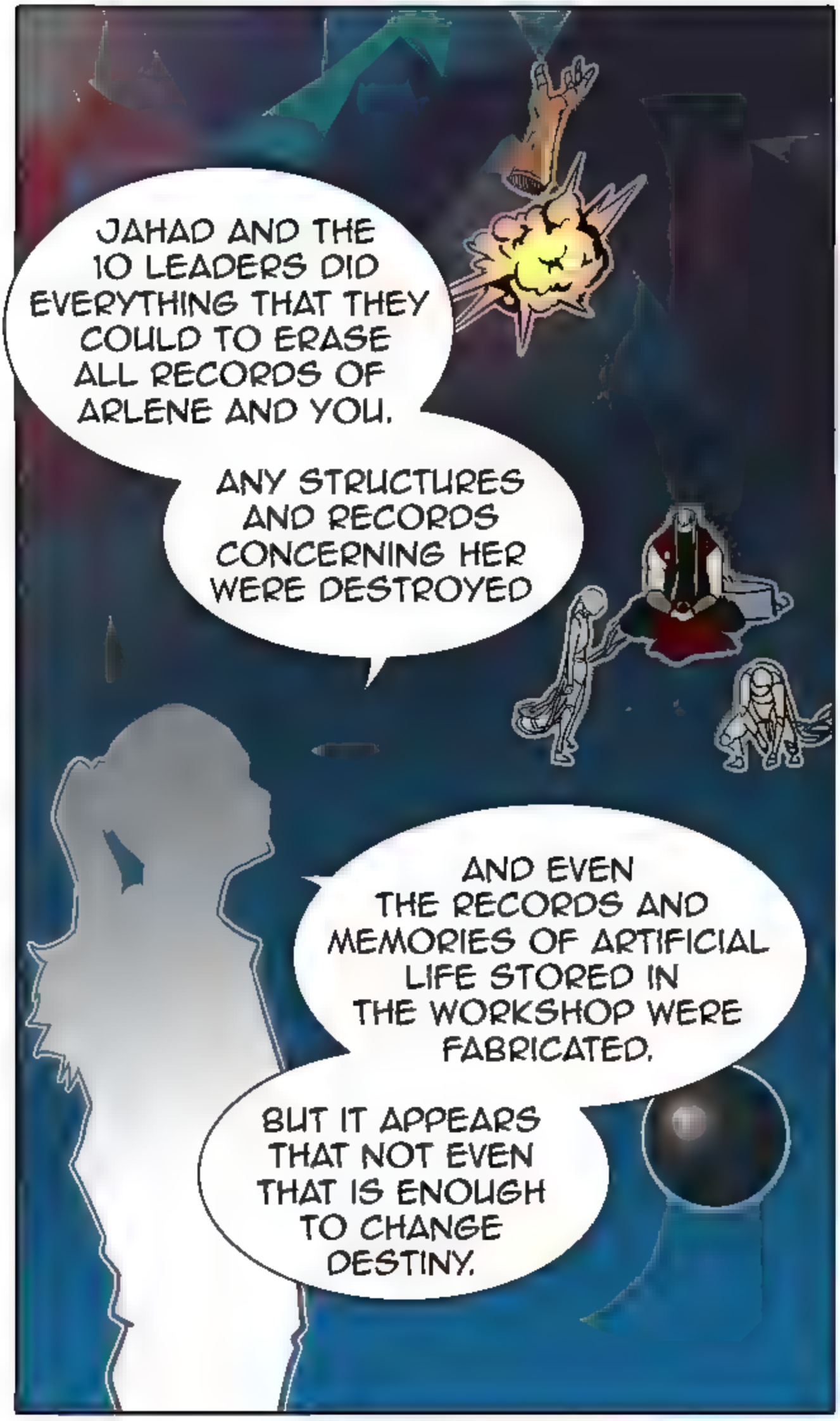
"THAT CHILD WILL OPEN THE DOOR TO THIS TOWER AND RETURN SOMEDAY."
STEP-
"HE SHALL ACHIEVE VENGEANCE FOR MY LOVE
AND FINISH THE WAR WHICH WE STARTED WITH HIS OWN HANDS."
STEP-

"HE SHALL DESTROY CORRUPT POWER
WOONG-
AND BRING TRUTH TO THE TOWER."
WOONG-

"GOD'S MESSENGER SHALL PLACE THE RED THORN IN THAT CHILD'S HANDS
AND THAT CHILD SHALL USE THE RED THORN TO CUT THE THROAT OF THE GREEDY KING."
.....
"AND HE SHALL FIND THE HIDDEN KEY, OPEN THE DOOR
WOONG-
WOONG-


AND LEAD EVERYONE ON THE TOWER TO GREATER HEIGHTS."

YOU ARE THE CHILD IN THAT PROPHECY.
JUE VIOLE GRACE.


JAHAD AND THE 10 LEADERS DID EVERYTHING THAT THEY COULD TO ERASE ALL RECORDS OF ARLENE AND YOU.
ANY STRUCTURES AND RECORDS CONCERNING HER WERE DESTROYED
AND EVEN THE RECORDS AND MEMORIES OF ARTIFICIAL LIFE STORED IN THE WORKSHOP WERE FABRICATED.
BUT IT APPEARS THAT NOT EVEN THAT IS ENOUGH TO CHANGE DESTINY.

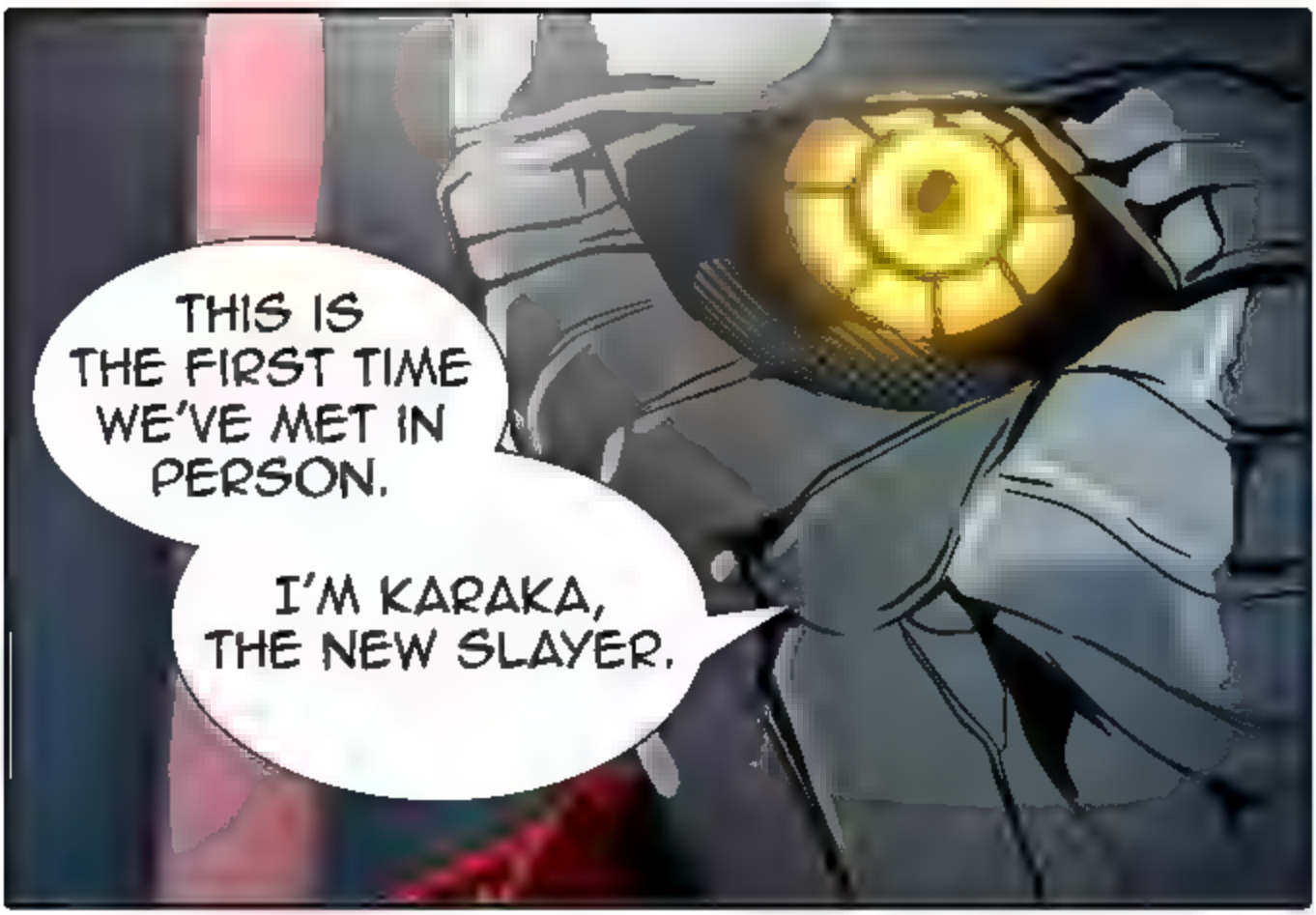
HER RECORDS REMAIN HERE EVEN TO THIS DAY
AND NOW, YOU HAVE APPEARED BEFORE ME.

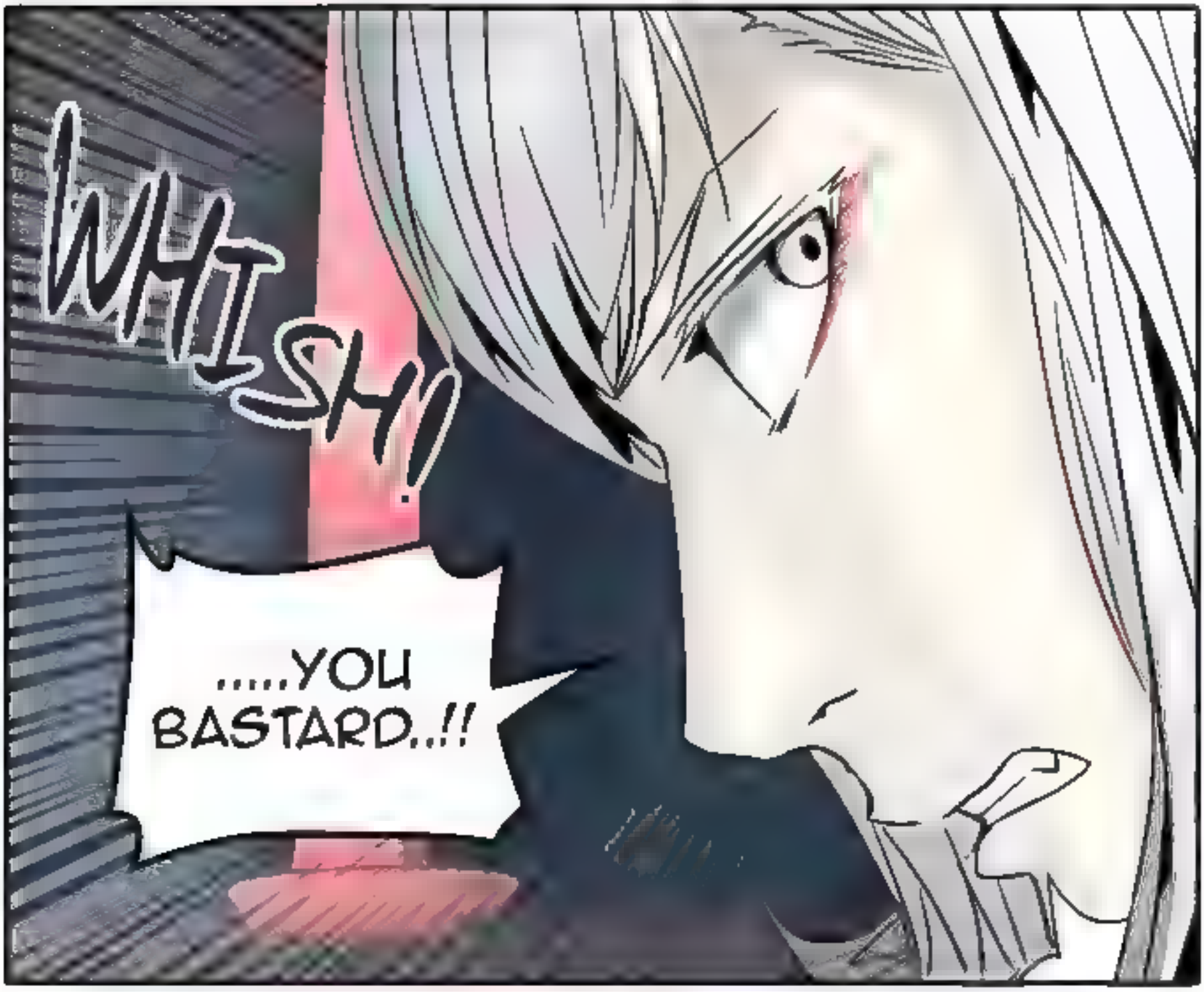
YOU WERE DESTINED TO COME TO THIS PLACE.

STRETCH
AAAAAA
HHHHHH-

THAT SUITCASE.
IT WAS SO UNCOMFORTABLE BEING STUCK IN THERE FOR SO LONG.
SORRY, RACHEL.
WE WERE PASSING THROUGH A DANGEROUS SPOT SO I LET YOU OUT A BIT LATE.
IT'S ALRIGHT.

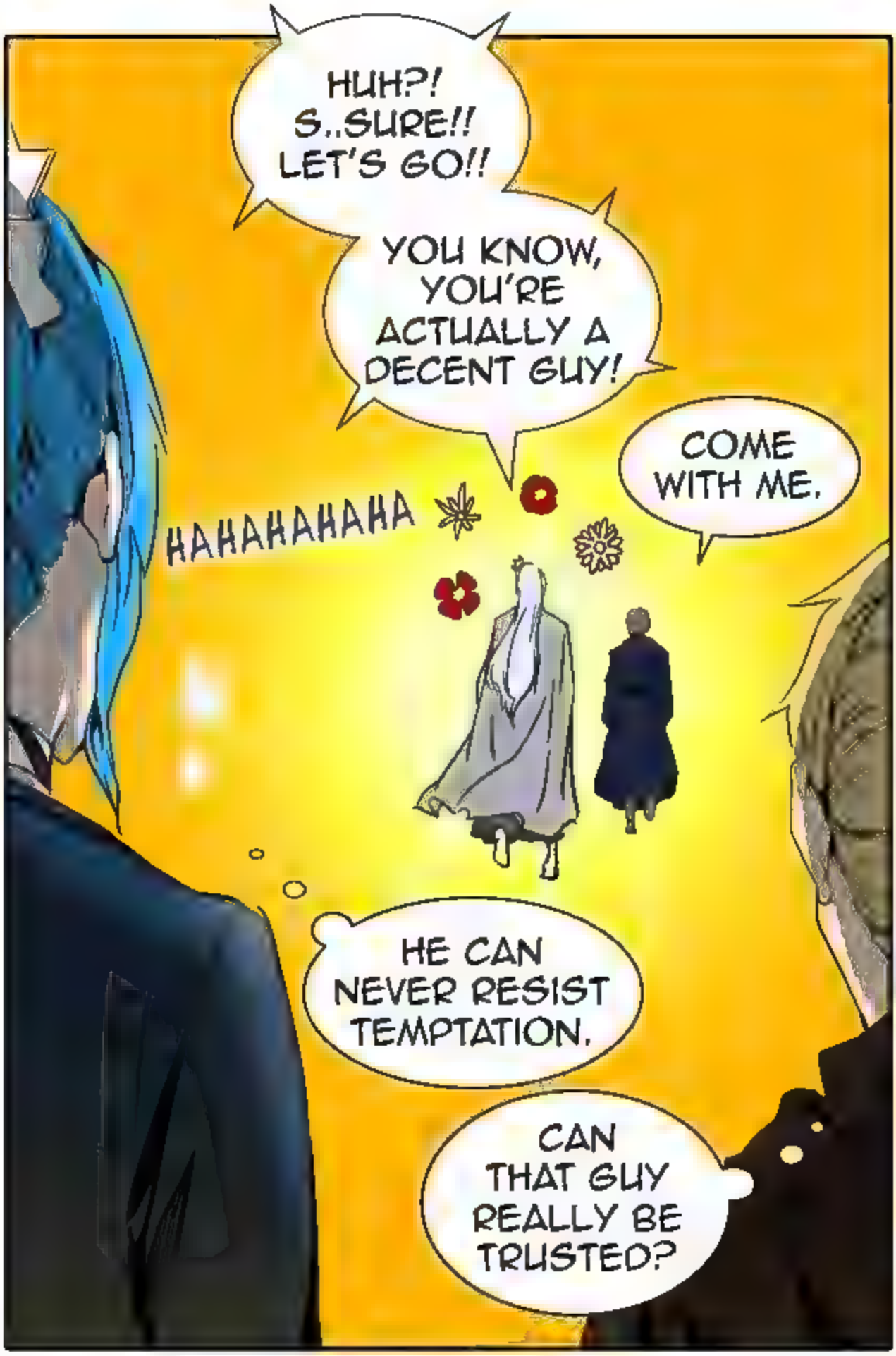
WHITE.
SSK
...?

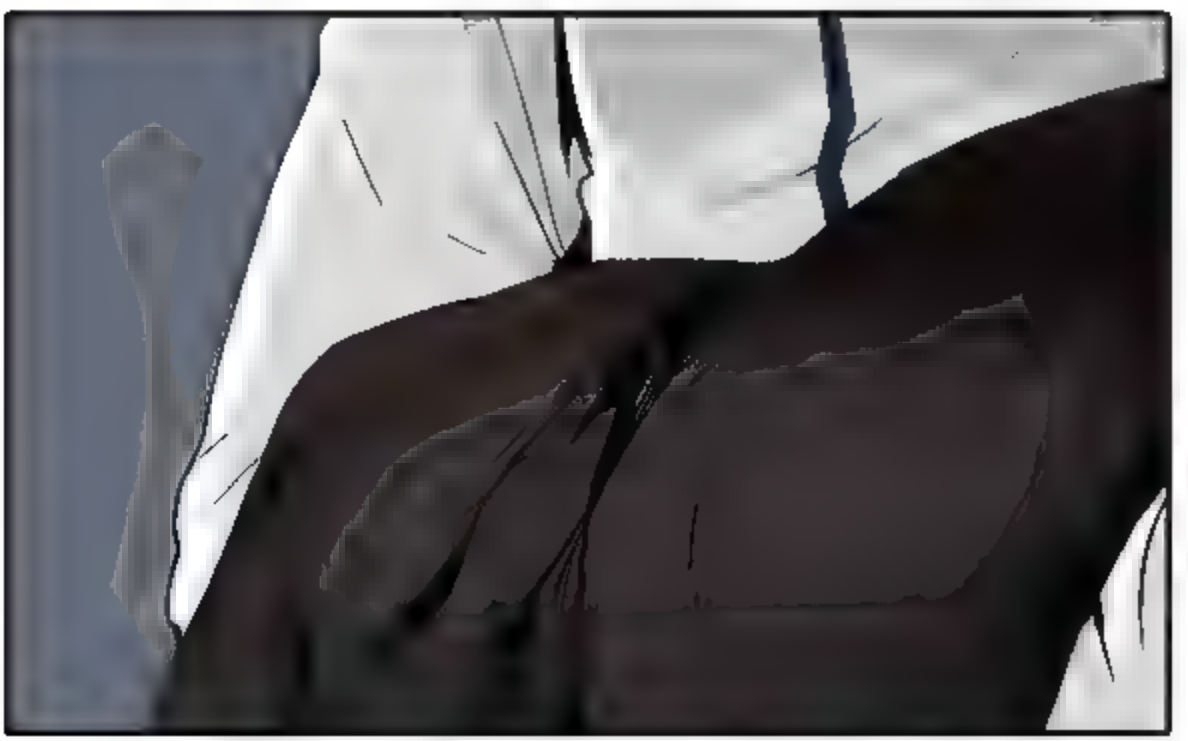

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE'VE MET IN PERSON.
I'M KARAKA, THE NEW SLAYER.


WHISH!
.....YOU BASTARD..!!

STOMP-
...YOU ARROGANT LITTLE PUNK..!
STOMP-
HOW DARE YOU MESS AROUND WITH ME WHILE PRETENDING TO HELP ME!?
ARE YOU LOOKING DOWN ON ME BECAUSE I LOST MY POSITION AS A SLAYER!?

WHITE.
THERE IS A WAY TO REVIVE YOUR POWER HERE ON THE FLOOR OF DEATH.
..HM..?!
I DON'T WANT TO LET THE DETAILS LEAK, SO COULD I TALK TO YOU IN PRIVATE..?

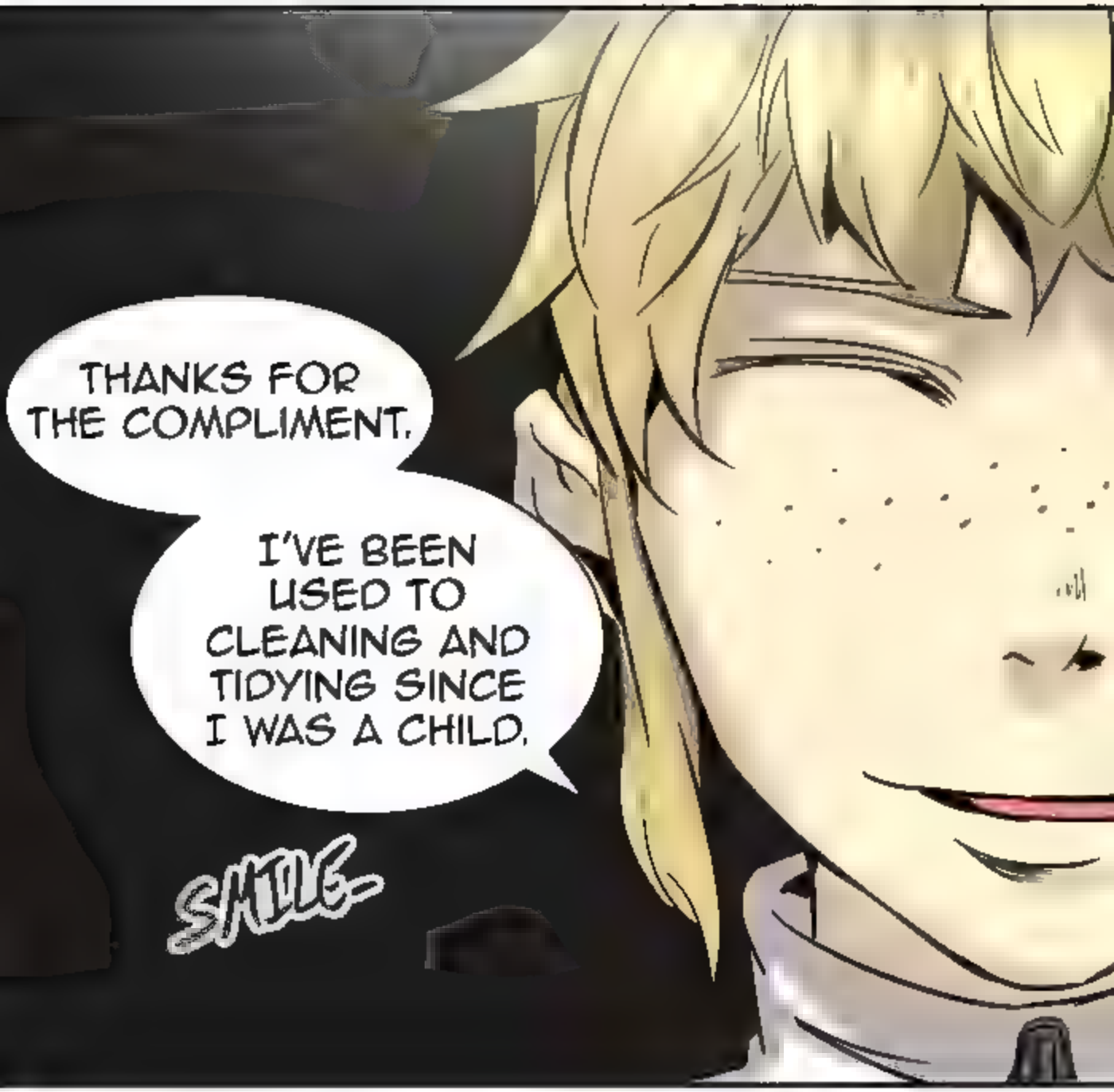

HUH?! S..SURE!! LET'S GO!!
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE ACTUALLY A DECENT GUY!
COME WITH ME.
HAHAHAHAHA
HE CAN NEVER RESIST TEMPTATION.
CAN THAT GUY REALLY BE TRUSTED?



I DIDN'T THINK THAT THERE WOULD BE A SLAYER ON THE TRAIN.
I WAS SERIOUSLY SO SURPRISED.
SAME HERE. I WONDER HOW THIS HAPPENED..

STARE-
...?

WANGNAN, IS SOMETHING WRONG?
NO.
YOU'RE JUST MORE SKILLED AT TIDYING THAN YOU LOOK.
OH...


THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT.
I'VE BEEN USED TO CLEANING AND TIDYING SINCE I WAS A CHILD.
SMILE-

...DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA. I WAS INSULTING YOU, NOT COMPLIMENTING YOU.
STILL, THANK YOU FOR SHOWING INTEREST IN ME.
HMPH. I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOU. IT'S JUST...

ALL I WANTED TO KNOW IS WHY A NICE KID LIKE VIOLE
WOULD BE FOLLOWING YOU AROUND.

'NICE,'
YOU SAY..
THAT'S
TRUE.

HE REALLY IS NICE. THAT BOY..
AND I'M BAD.
..YOU'RE SO TWISTED.
STEP-
STEP-
IT'S TRUE, ISN'T IT?

I'M A BAD PERSON.
SHHH_

ACTUALLY, I WANTED TO AT LEAST KEEP THIS KIND OF THING FROM BAM.
YOU WANTED TO PRETEND TO BE A NICE PERSON AFTER KILLING THAT MANY PEOPLE?
DREAM ON.

...HAHA.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
THAT'S PUSHING
IT A BIT MUCH.

I'M DONE FOR NOW.
HEHE-
..YOU'RE SERIOUSLY A PSYCHO.

YOU REALLY DON'T SEEM SANE.
WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU GOING TO SUCH TROUBLE TO GAIN?
MONEY? POWER? DO YOU WANT TO BECOME A DARK LORD OR SOMETHING?

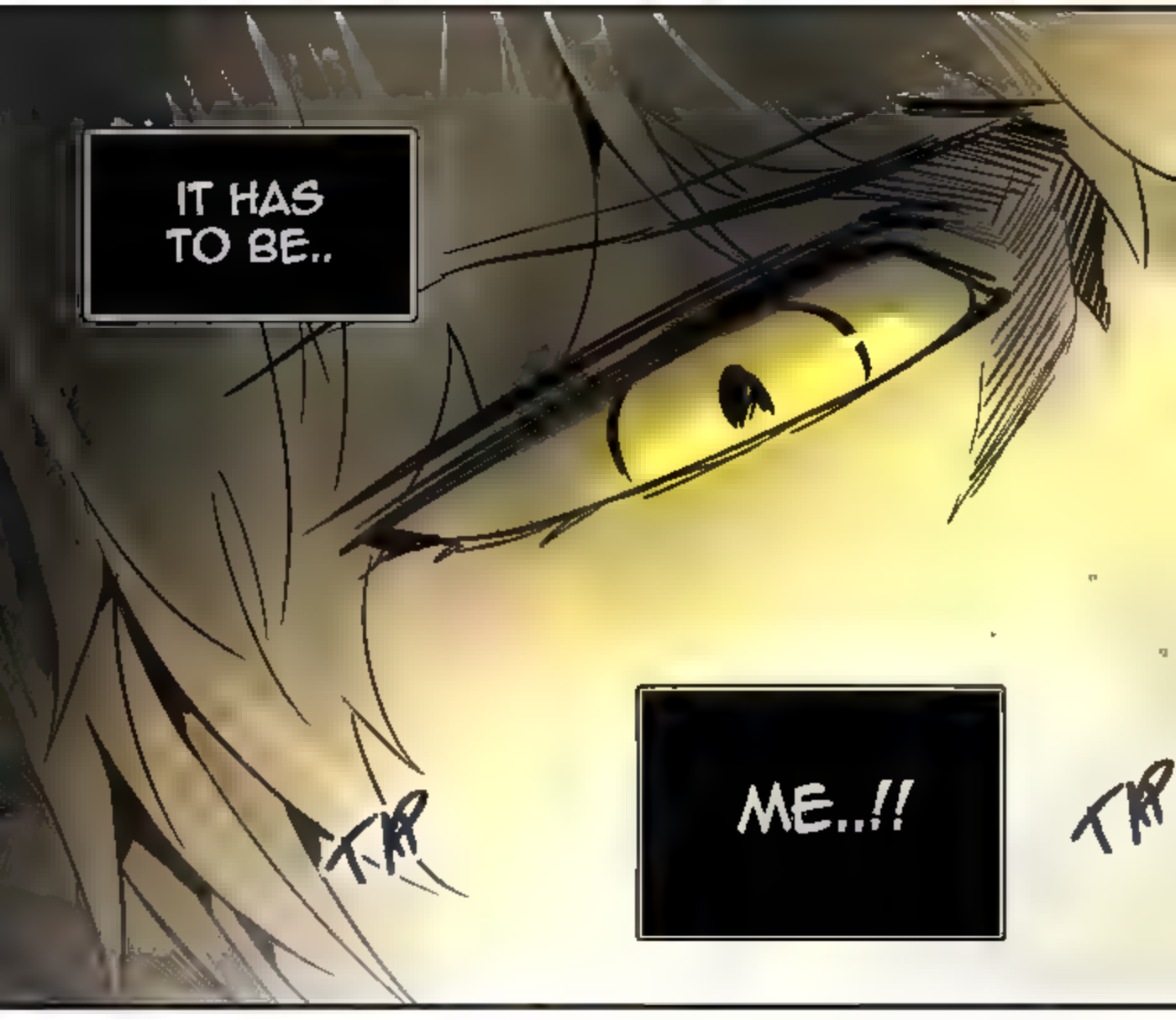
..NO.
WHAT I WANT
IS SIMPLY A BLUE SKY, COUNTLESS STARS AND A COOL BREEZE.

THAT RIDICULOUSLY BEAUTIFUL VIEW...
WHICH THAT PERSON WANTED FOR THE ENTIRE LIFE.

IF ONLY I MAY BE ABLE TO SEE THAT SIGHT MYSELF..
I WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH THAT.

..? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT..?
THAT PERSON?
HEHE.
YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW.

ARLENE..
I DON'T CARE WHAT BAM IS TO YOU.
I'M THE ONE FROM THE LEGEND WHO WILL OBTAIN THE THORN AND MAKE YOUR WISH COME TRUE.
TAP-
TAP-


IT HAS TO BE..
TAP
ME..!!
TAP

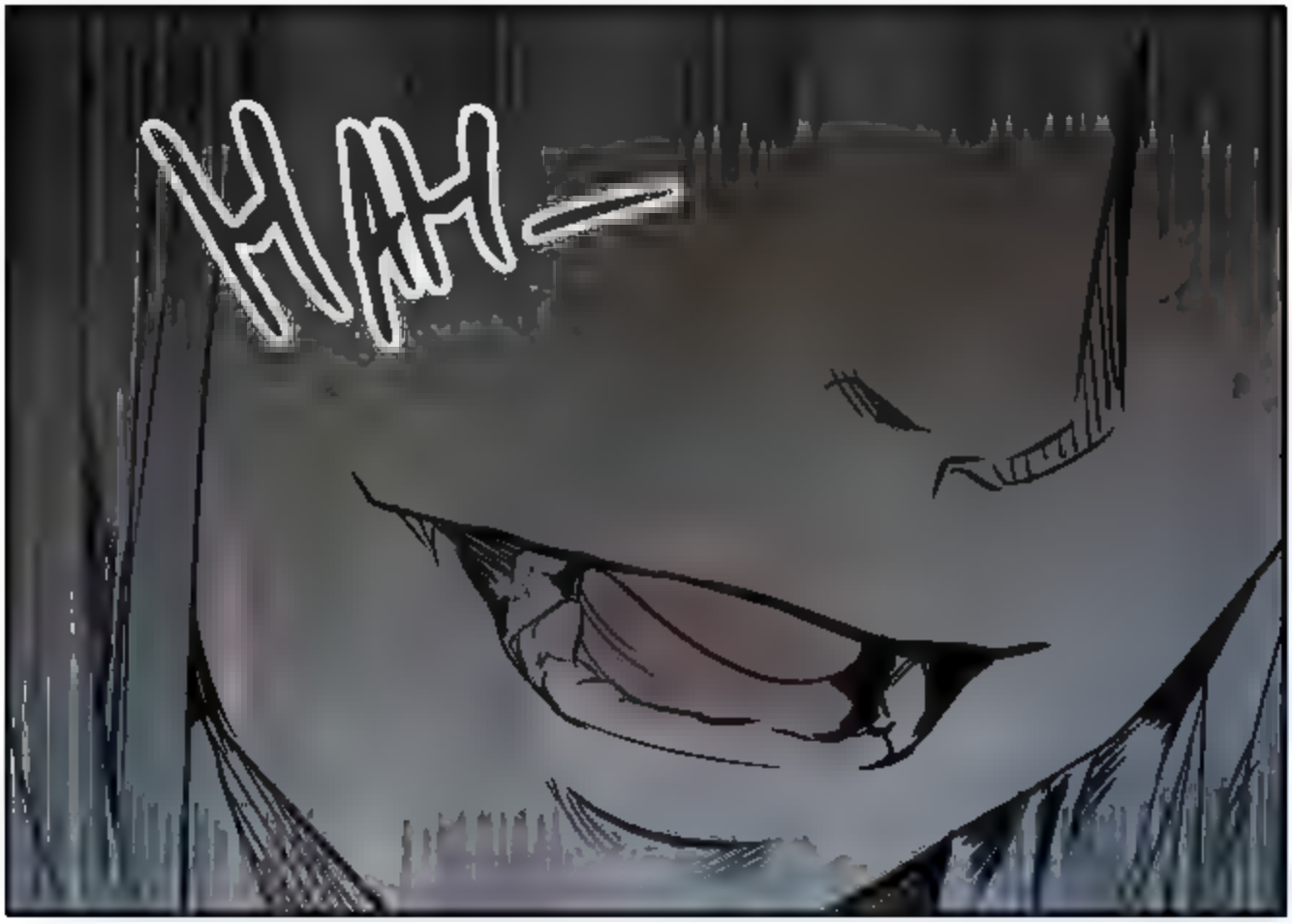
THERE'S A WAY FOR ME TO REVIVE HERE?!
HURRY UP AND TELL ME!!
YES, WHITE.

THE SOURCE OF YOUR POWER IS DEFINITELY 'SOULS.'
EVEN WITHOUT CLONES, AS LONG AS YOU HAVE THE POWER OF NUMEROUS SOULS,
YOU COULD BREAK FREE FROM THE SHACKLES ON YOU NOW, RIGHT?
HMPH!! OF COURSE!! AT THE HEIGHT OF MY POWER, I CAN BEAT ANY IMITATION SPELL CAST BY SOME SILLY REGULARS!!

ACTUALLY, HERE ON THE FLOOR OF DEATH
THERE IS A PLACE CALLED THE 'SPIRIT ROOM'
WHERE THE SOULS OF EVERYONE LIVING ON THE FLOOR OF DEATH ARE HIDDEN.

THERE ARE AT LEAST TENS OF THOUSANDS OF SOULS THERE-
INCLUDING THE SOULS OF RANKERS.
.....!!

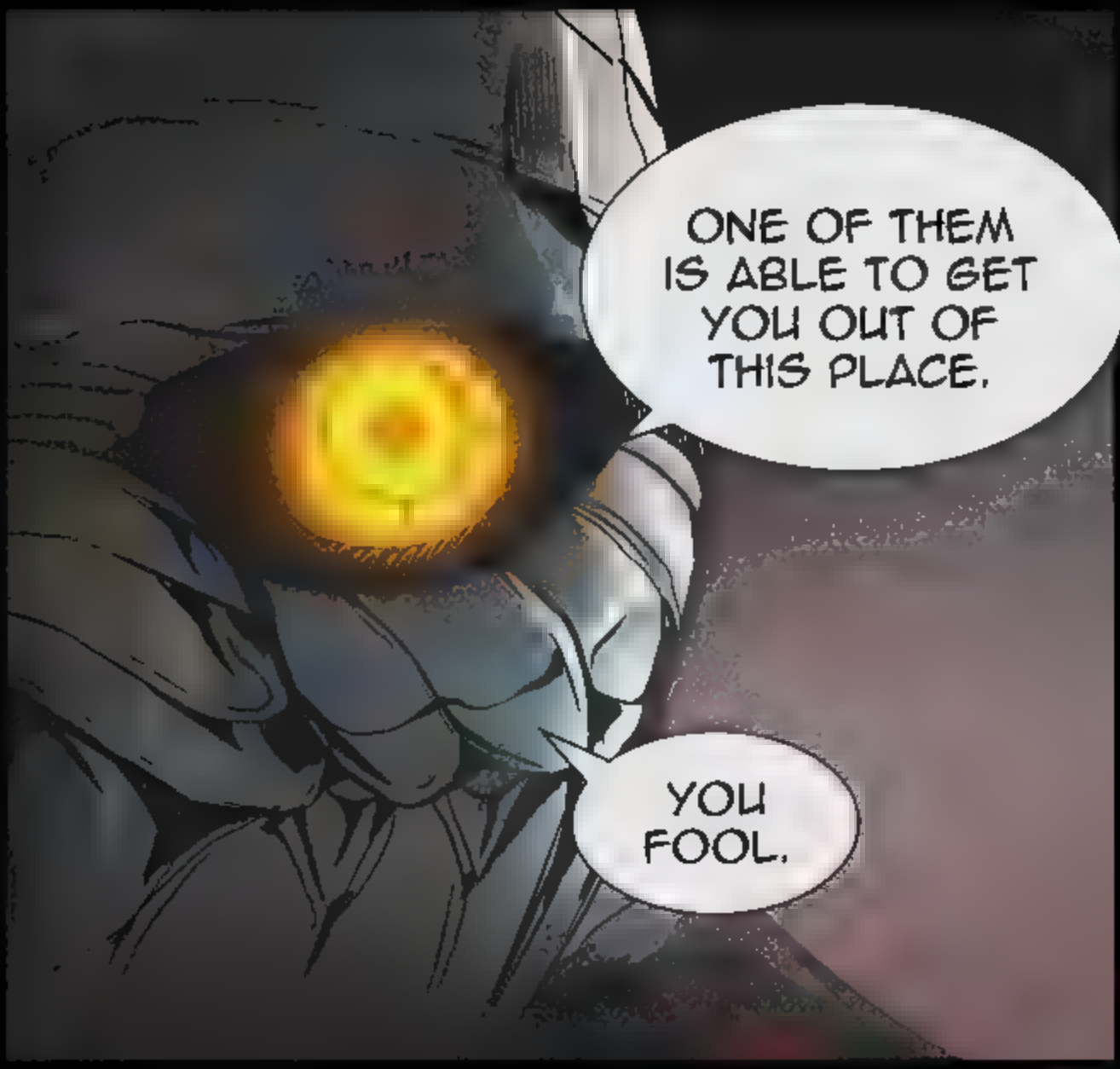
IF YOU WERE TO OBTAIN THOSE SOULS-


HAH—

KARAKA.
TELL ME ABOUT THAT.. IN MORE DETAIL.
KRAKKKK

SHH

.....
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DOESN'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND.

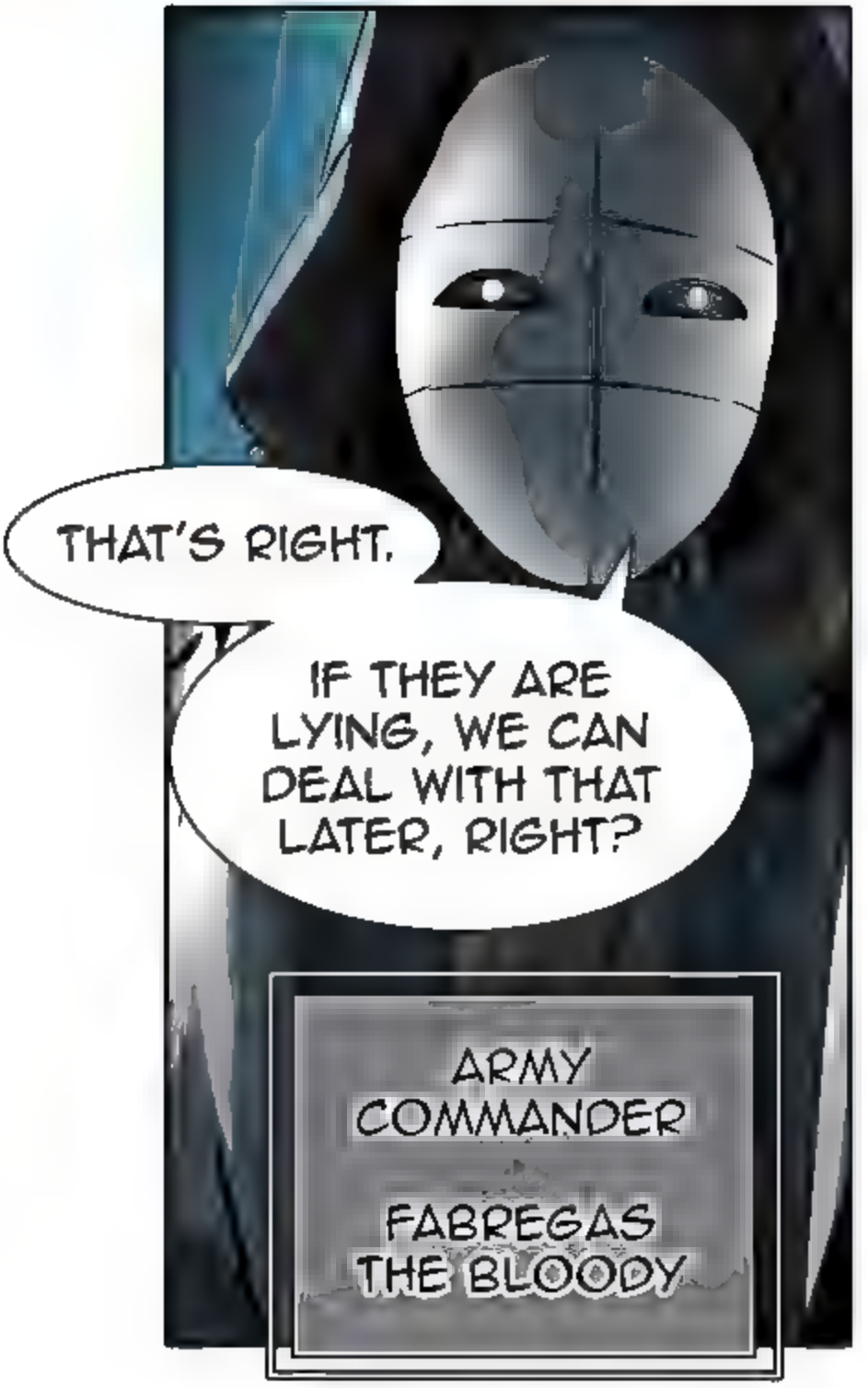

ONE OF THEM IS ABLE TO GET YOU OUT OF THIS PLACE.
YOU FOOL.

WHAT DO YOU GUYS THINK?
ABOUT WHAT HE'S SAYING...

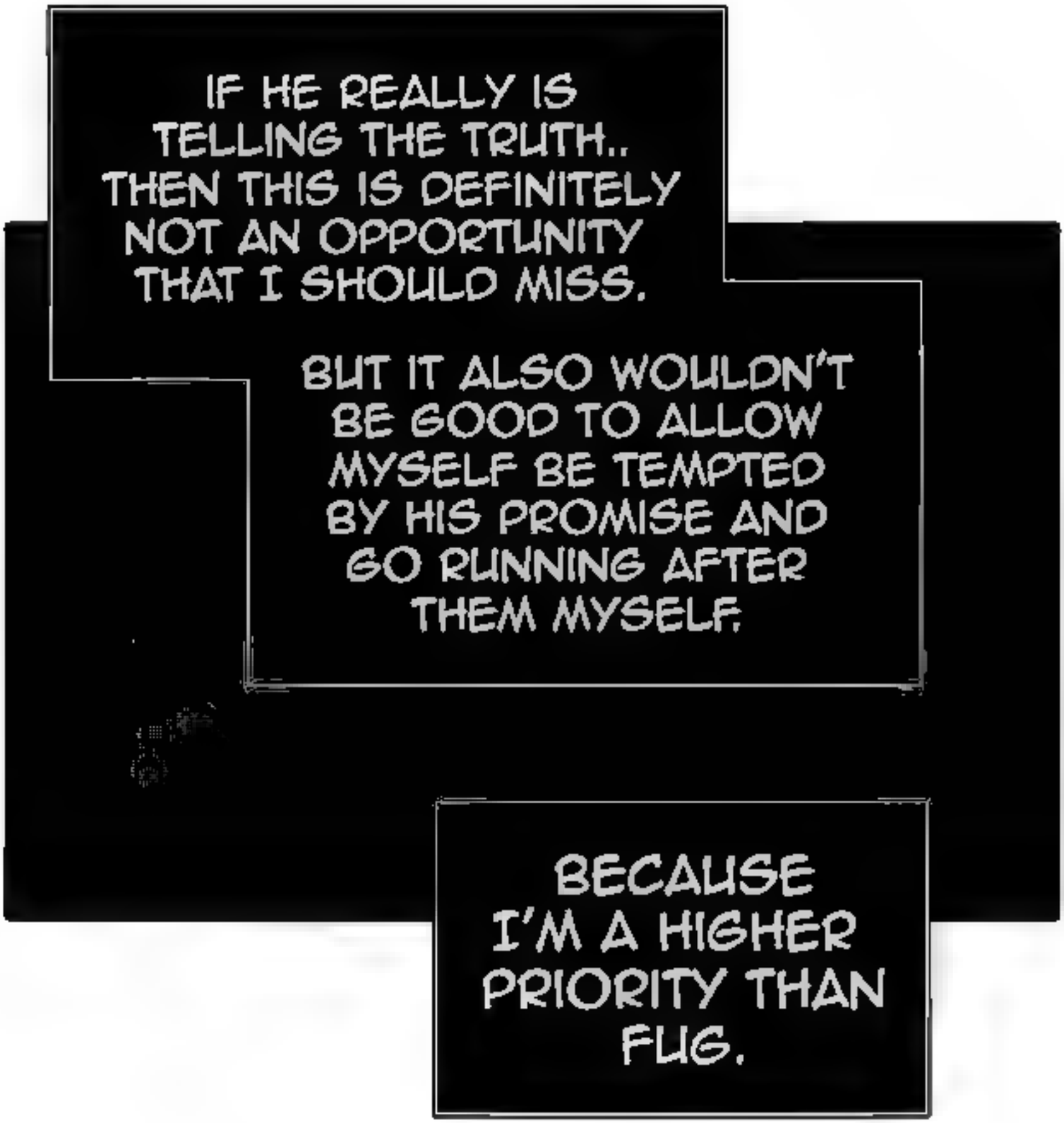
IT'S NONSENSE THAT HE'S SAYING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US.
PAY NO ATTENTION TO HIM, MASTER JOE.
ARMY COMMANDER
SANCHEZ THE PIERCER

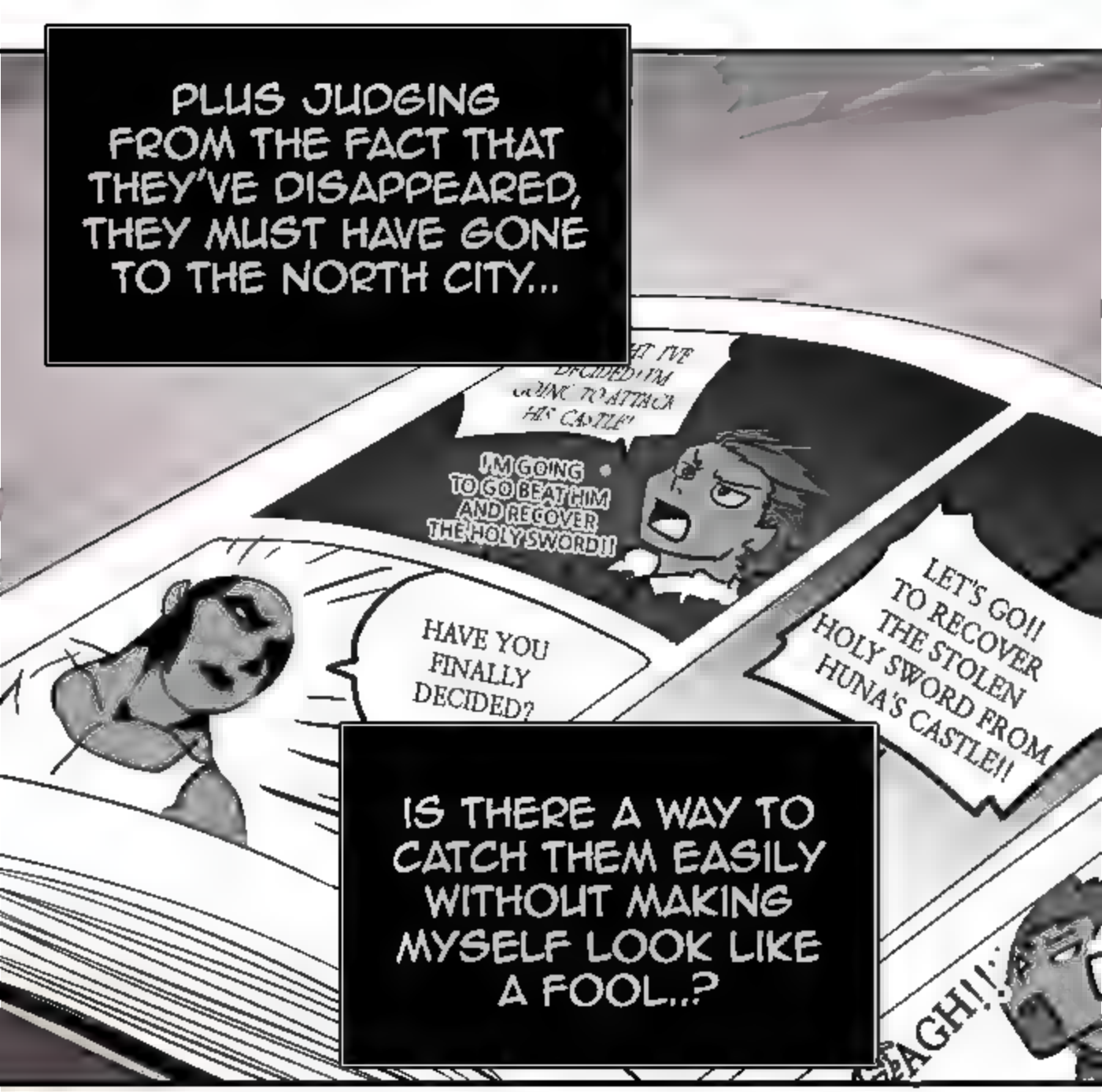
I THINK SO TOO. MASTER JOE.
IT SEEMS LIKE A LIE.
SHISH!
ARMY COMMANDER
CHARLOTTE THE TEMPTRESS

I DISAGREE.
THERE IS NO REASON TO HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO FAITH IN WHAT HE IS SAYING.
PERHAPS WE SHOULD GIVE HIM A CHANCE..
GRIN-
ARMY COMMANDER
WILCOTT THE WINDY

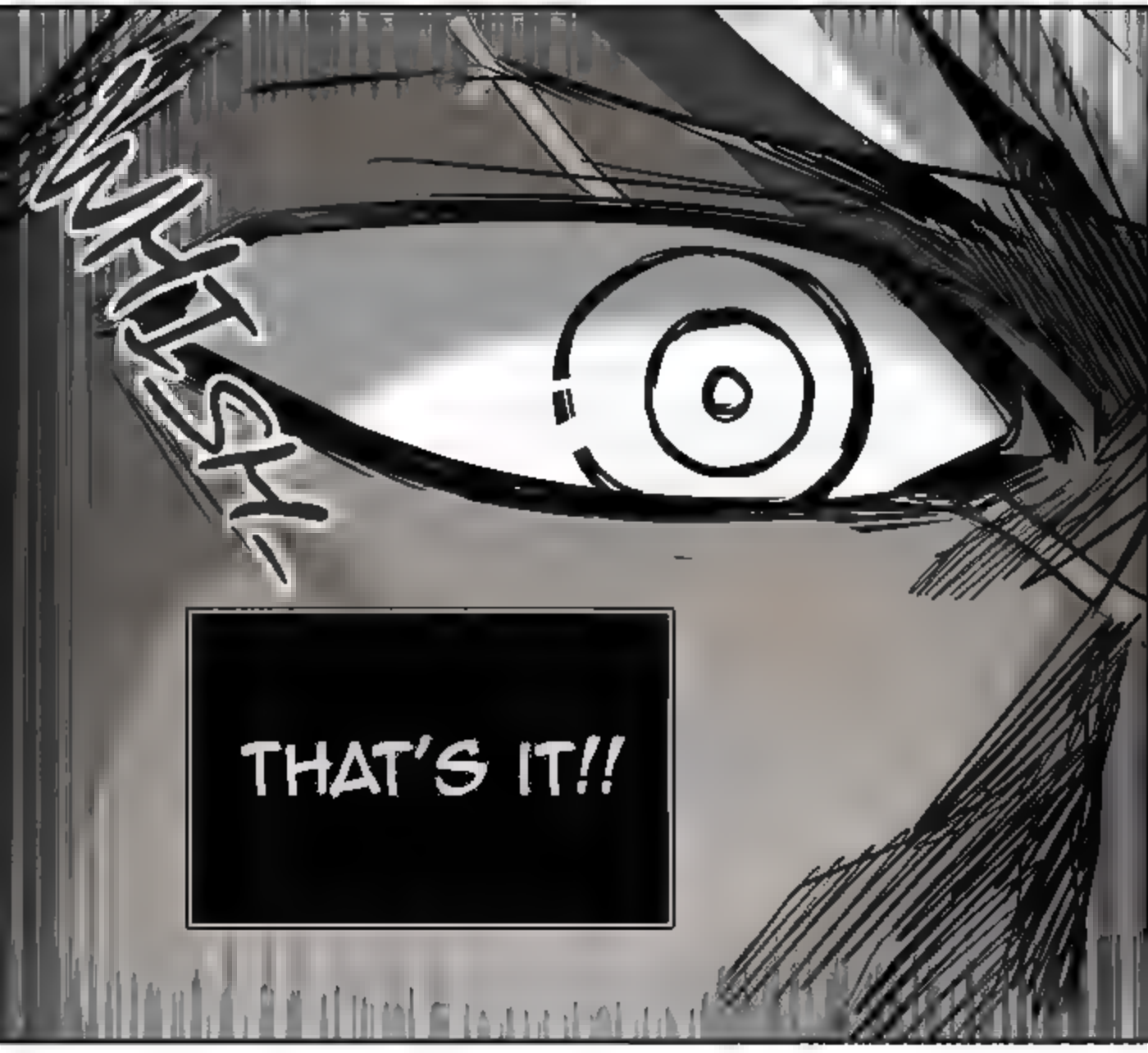

THAT'S RIGHT.
IF THEY ARE LYING, WE CAN DEAL WITH THAT LATER, RIGHT?
ARMY COMMANDER
FABREGAS THE BLOODY

MASTER JOE..
I WOULD AT LEAST ENTERTAIN THE POSSIBILITY...
THIS IS A CHANCE THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO MISS IF HE IS TELLING THE TRUTH.
ARMY COMMANDER
SSONG THE TRAITOR

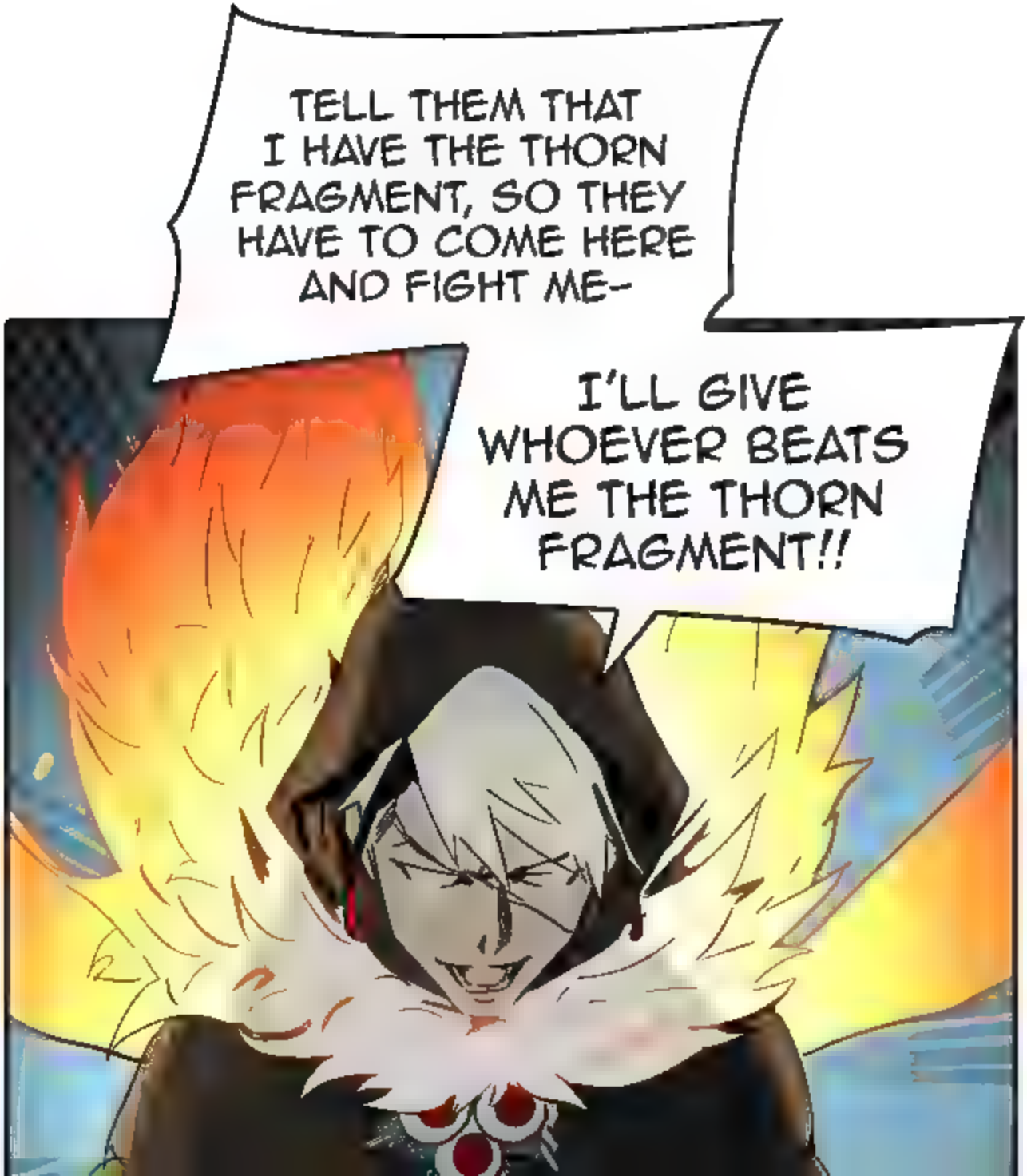

IF HE REALLY IS TELLING THE TRUTH.. THEN THIS IS DEFINITELY NOT AN OPPORTUNITY THAT I SHOULD MISS.
BUT IT ALSO WOULDN'T BE GOOD TO ALLOW MYSELF BE TEMPTED BY HIS PROMISE AND GO RUNNING AFTER THEM MYSELF.
BECAUSE I'M A HIGHER PRIORITY THAN FUG.


PLUS JUDGING FROM THE FACT THAT THEY'VE DISAPPEARED, THEY MUST HAVE GONE TO THE NORTH CITY...
I'M GOING TO GO BEAT HIM AND RECOVER THE HOLY SWORD!!
HAVE YOU FINALLY DECIDED?
LET'S GO!! TO RECOVER THE STOLEN HOLY SWORD FROM HUNA'S CASTLE!!
IS THERE A WAY TO CATCH THEM EASILY WITHOUT MAKING MYSELF LOOK LIKE A FOOL..?
AGH!!

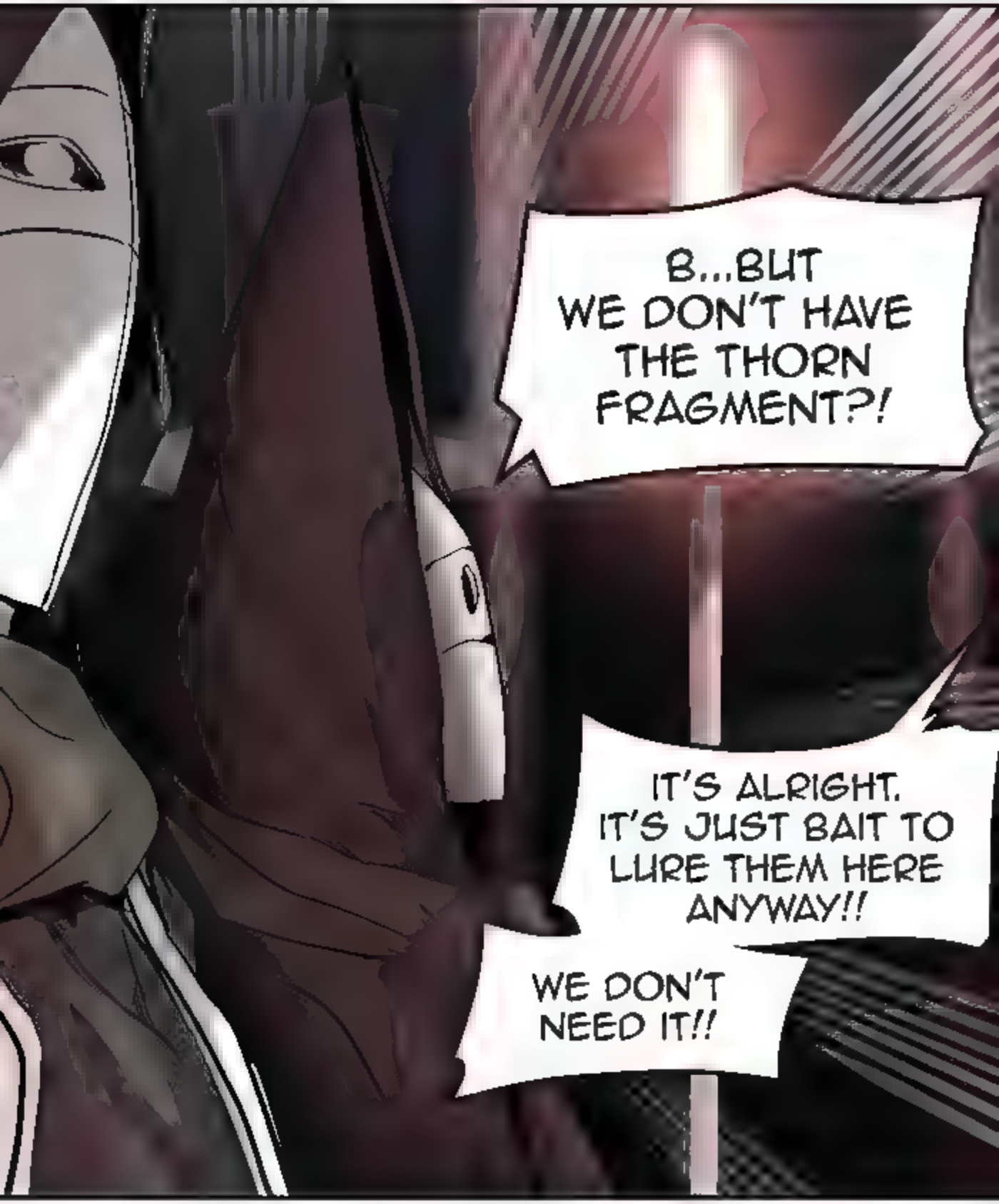
ALRIGHT, I'VE DECIDED! I'M GOING TO ATTACK HIS CASTLE!
I'M GOING TO GO BEAT HIM AND RECOVER THE HOLY SWORD!!
....?!


SWISH
THAT'S IT!!

I HAVE A GOOD IDEA!!
USE THE HOLES TO SEND OUT A MESSAGE ACROSS THE ENTIRE HELL FLOOR RIGHT THIS INSTANT!!
"IF YOU WANT THE THORN FRAGMENT-
COME AND ATTACK HELL JOE'S CASTLE"!!
WHAT?!


TELL THEM THAT I HAVE THE THORN FRAGMENT, SO THEY HAVE TO COME HERE AND FIGHT ME-
I'LL GIVE WHOEVER BEATS ME THE THORN FRAGMENT!!

THEN THEY'LL COME HERE ON THEIR OWN IN ORDER TO GET THE THORN FRAGMENT!!


B...BUT WE DON'T HAVE THE THORN FRAGMENT?!
IT'S ALRIGHT. IT'S JUST BAIT TO LURE THEM HERE ANYWAY!!
WE DON'T NEED IT!!

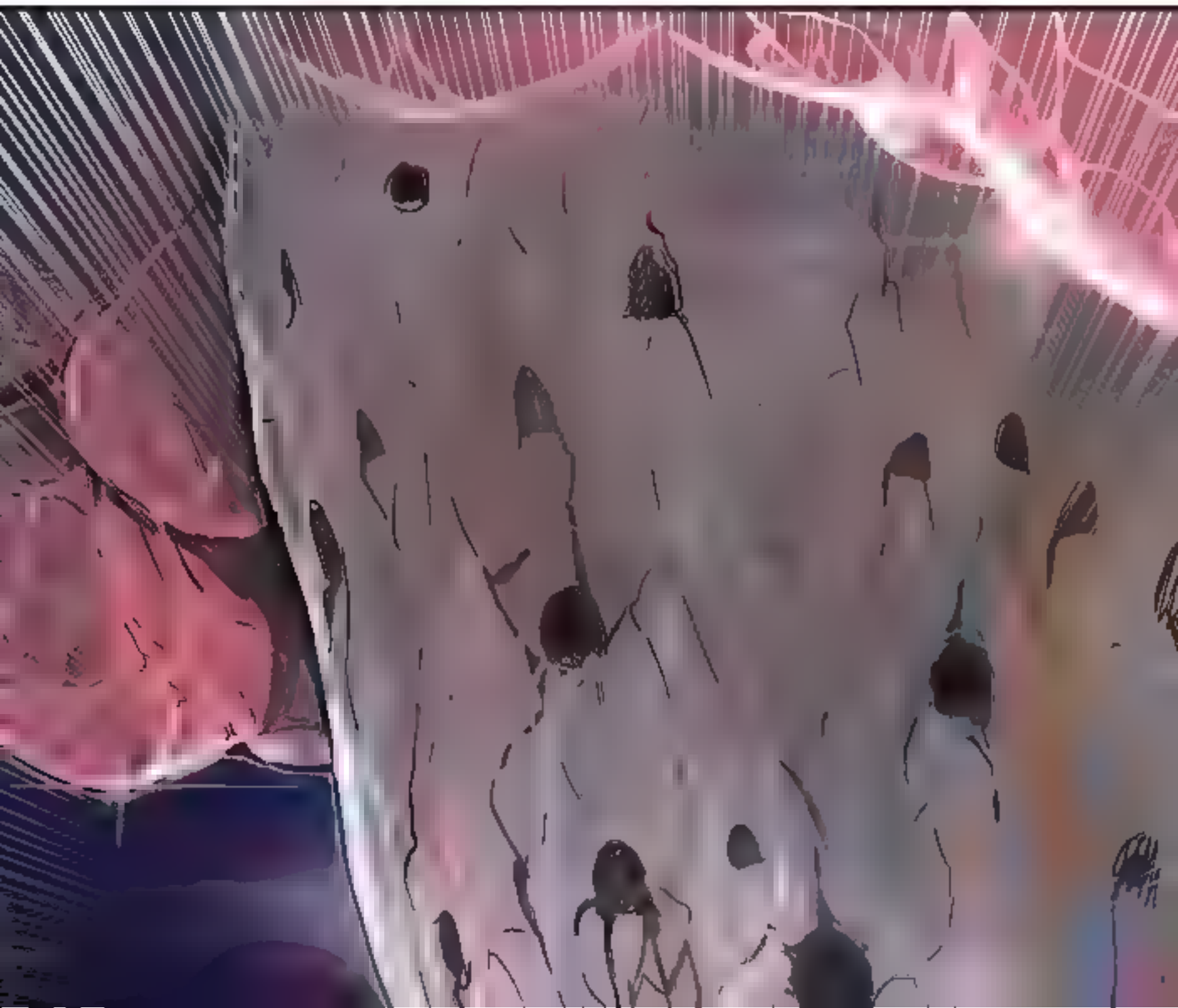
TELL FUG TO PARTICIPATE AS WELL IF THEY WANT THE THORN FRAGMENT!!
THIS IS MY CHANCE TO REALLY TEACH THEM A LESSON!!
IF THEY LOSE HERE, NOT EVEN THEY WILL BE ABLE TO DEMAND THE THORN FRAGMENT FROM ME ANYMORE!!

I WANT YOU GUYS TO PARTICIPATE TOO!!
HUH?!

KRRRRRRRR
WE'RE GOING TO WIPE OUT ALL OF OUTSIDERS AS SOON AS THEY SHOW UP HERE IN SEARCH OF THE THORN!!
WE'RE GOING TO LEAVE THIS PLACE AND RULE THE TOWER!!

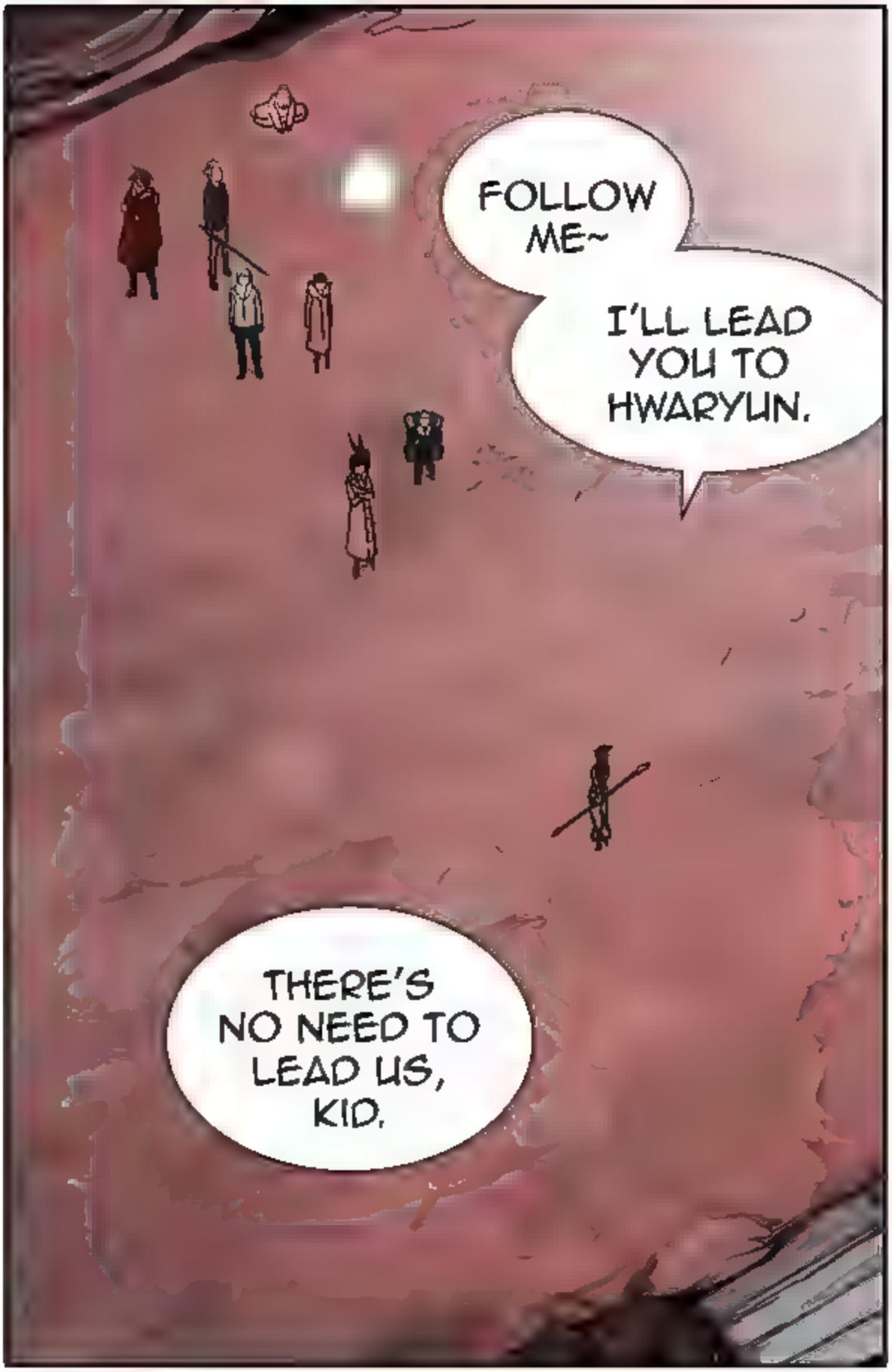
YURI AND EVAN'S TEAM
HOW MUCH FURTHER DO WE HAVE TO GO..?
I WONDER. IT FEELS LIKE WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOR AGES..

WE'RE HERE-!
?



THIS IS OUR RED WITCH GUIDES' SECRET PLACE:
THE GALLSTONE VILLAGE~!
WHISK

WHOA-
IT'S HUGE..
GALLSTONE..?


FOLLOW ME~
I'LL LEAD YOU TO HWARYUN.
THERE'S NO NEED TO LEAD US, KID.

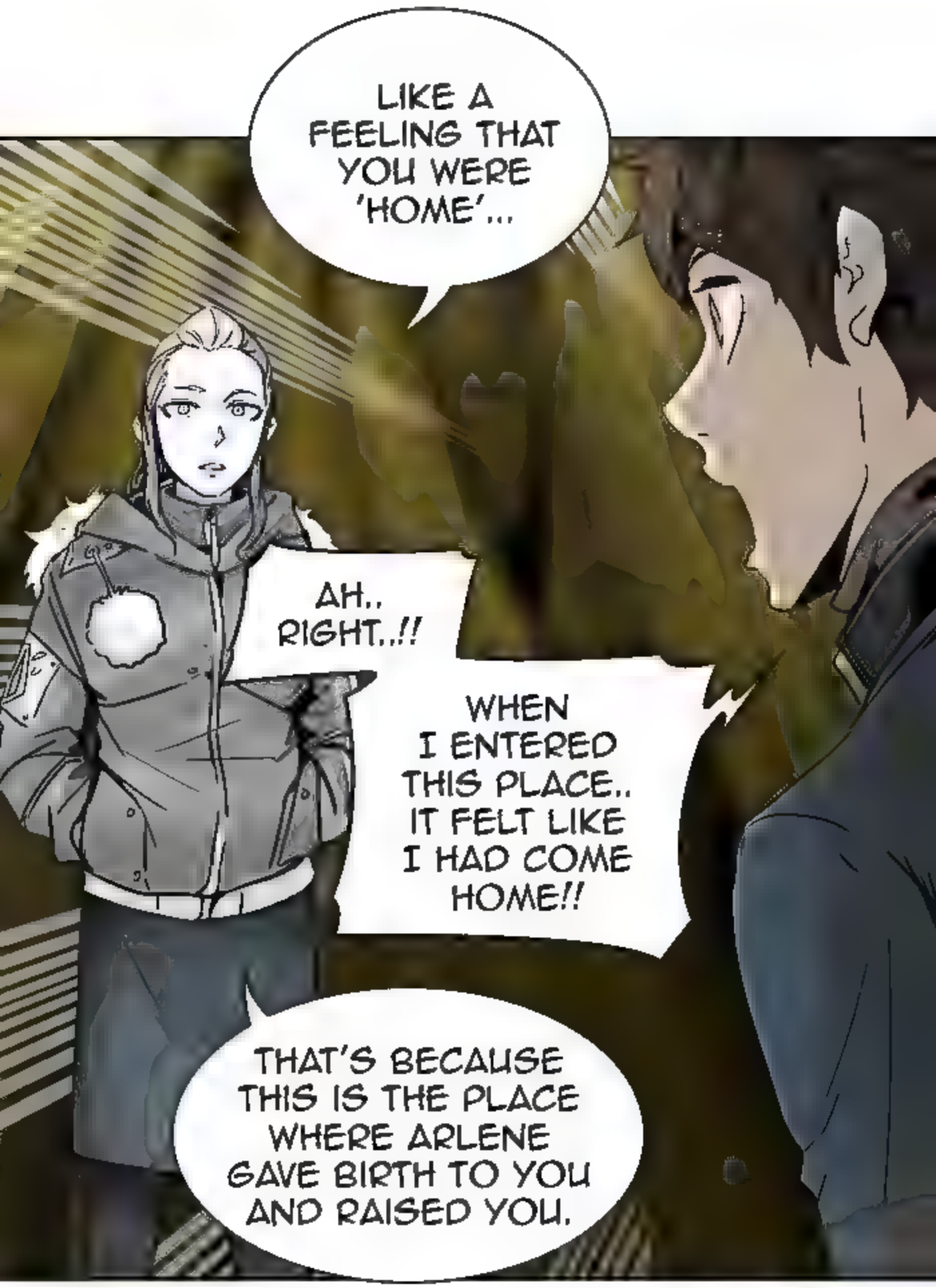
I'LL LEAD THEM FROM HERE. YOU CAN GO.
STOP
!! HWARYUN!!

HWARYUN!! WHY DID YOU DISAPPEAR BY YOURSELF!?
YES! RIGHT!!
THAT WAS SO UNFAIR!!
GO ON IN~
FOLLOW ME~

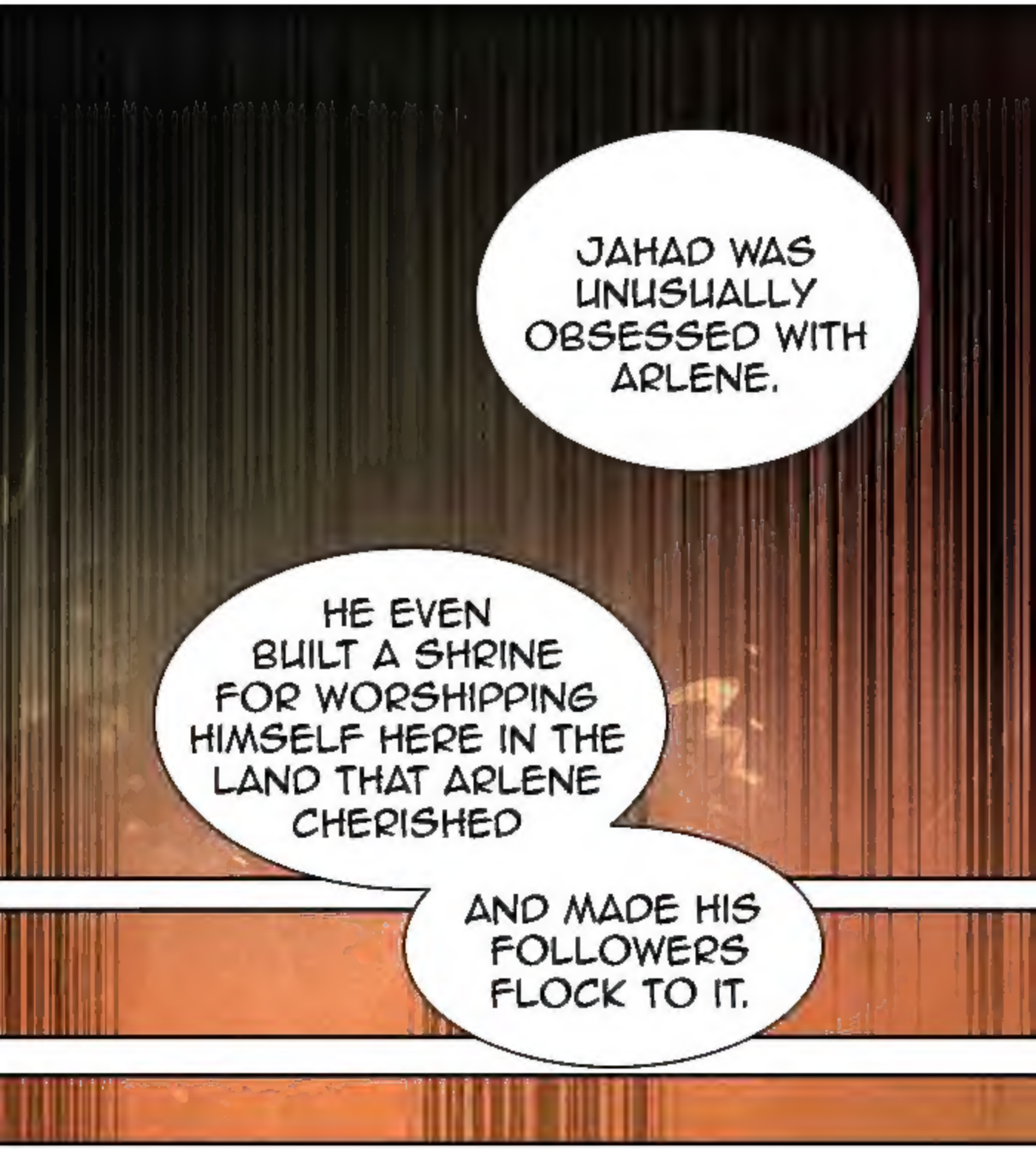
I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU ABOUT HELL JOE.

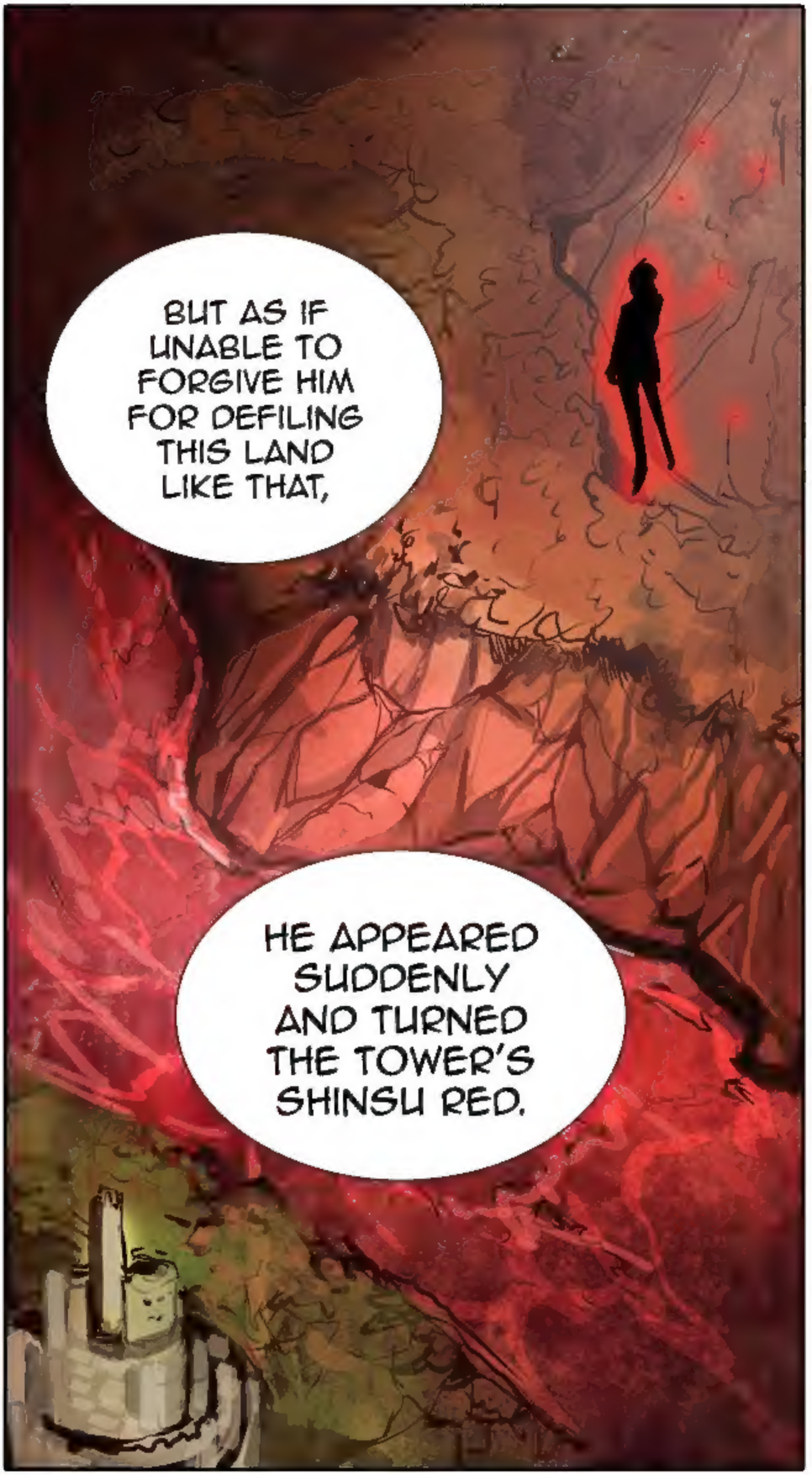
...WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HOW DO YOU FEEL AFTER HEARING ABOUT YOURSELF?
.....
I'M NOT SURE.

IT JUST SOUNDS SO SURREAL TO ME..
SURE. BUT YOU CAME TO THIS PLACE.
DIDN'T YOU FEEL A SENSE OF LONGING WHEN YOU ENTERED HERE?


LIKE A FEELING THAT YOU WERE 'HOME'...
AH.. RIGHT..!!
WHEN I ENTERED THIS PLACE.. IT FELT LIKE I HAD COME HOME!!
THAT'S BECAUSE THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE ARLENE GAVE BIRTH TO YOU AND RAISED YOU.

THE PLACE WHERE SHE GAVE BIRTH TO ME.. AND RAISED ME..
THAT'S RIGHT. PERHAPS THAT'S WHY..
JAHAD BUILT HIS OWN ALTAR HERE AFTER SHE DISAPPEARED.


JAHAD WAS UNUSUALLY OBSESSED WITH ARLENE.
HE EVEN BUILT A SHRINE FOR WORSHIPPING HIMSELF HERE IN THE LAND THAT ARLENE CHERISHED
AND MADE HIS FOLLOWERS FLOCK TO IT.


BUT AS IF UNABLE TO FORGIVE HIM FOR DEFILING THIS LAND LIKE THAT,
HE APPEARED SUDDENLY AND TURNED THE TOWER'S SHINSU RED.

ENRYU.

THE MESSENGER FROM GOD WHO CAME TO DELIVER THE THORN TO YOU.